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WHY WE PUNCTUATE

BY A JOURNALIST

WHY WE PUNCTUATE

OR, REASON VS. RULE IN THE USE OF MARKS

BY A JOURNALIST

William L. Klein

"Punctuation seems to be an art based upon rules without congruity, and derived from practice without uniformity."

ST. PAUL AND MINNEAPOLIS
THE LANCET PUBLISHING CO.
1897

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PREFACE.

It is a very remarkable fact that there exists in the English language only a single treatise, that of Mr. John Wilson, on the subject of punctuation; and it is out of print. True, there are a few minor works, and the subject is treated, generally in the space of a brief chapter, by most school text-books on composition and rhetoric; but it is sufficient to say of these hand-books and chapters that they are next to worthless, if for no other reason, because of their brevity. The hand-book of Mr. Bigelow, generally considered the standard, contains, in its treatment of the comma, the semicolon, the colon, and the period, less matter than is contained in ten pages of this volume. Moreover, they are all mere attempts at summarizing Mr. Wilson's rules, which are, I believe and as results clearly show, falsely based upon grammatical construction; for punctuation is a science whose principles are determined by the meaning of language, and are quite independent of grammatical arrangement, although the meaning and the arrangement of language are so closely allied as to make it possible to base upon the latter a system of rules, with many exceptions, which shall seem to be determined by the former.

Further, in Poole's Index to Periodical Literature only three or four references to the subject are to be found.

What inference is to be drawn from these facts? Plainly, either that the subject possesses little or no value, to the reader or the writer, or that it is so difficult as to be beyond the power of text-book makers to reduce it to a system of easily acquired rules, thus leaving it an enigma to almost all

men, except the professional proof-reader and an occasional author.

Of the value of punctuation there can be no question, because one can scarcely write a brief paragraph which shall not contain one or more sentences whose meaning depends upon their punctuation, and no one can read such paragraph understandingly without a knowledge of the meanings of the marks it contains.

Of Mr. Wilson's treatise, which is a monument to its author's patient industry and an evidence of years of painstaking labor, one can scarcely speak too highly; yet it is so minute, so voluminous, and so lacking in scientific generalization, as to make its mastery an exceedingly difficult and, to many, an impossible task. Great as is my admiration for the work, and my obligation to it, I believe it has cast a shadow of despair over almost everyone who has attempted to master the subject from its pages. In fact, I have heard many teachers, newspaper men, and authors express their inability to obtain a working knowledge of its rules. Moreover, such a task is almost impossible with any system of rules; and, besides, the writer who depends upon his memory for guidance in the use of marks, will have his attention so frequently withdrawn from his line of thought, by his effort to recall a rule, as to render obscure both the thought and the language. On the other hand, with the writer who punctuates by reason, the process of committing his thoughts to paper is a process of thought clarification, because if the use of a mark is determined by the meaning of the language, punctuation requires an exact analysis of thought in terms of language, which is the only analysis possible. In other words, the mark tests the meaning of the language, and determines whether it expresses the thought.

Because of the absence of a suitable text-book on punctuation, teachers of language, in common schools, colleges, and universities, have been content to ignore the subject, or to speak of it as an arbitrary system of symbols to be arbitrarily placed. But if they possess a thorough knowledge of the English language, they must be conscious of the fact that,

as Prof. Marsh says, the principles of punctuation are subtle, and spring out of the logical relations of language, a knowledge of which relations is essential, not alone to the mastery of punctuation, but to the mastery of language.

With this view of punctuation, and with a high appreciation of the uses and graces of language, I have endeavored to treat the subject so as to make a knowledge of it a knowledge of language, so as to make the use of marks as essential as the use of the plural verb with the plural subject, and so as to make one mark have a meaning as plain as another, and the meanings of all so plain that they shall become an integral and essential part of one's written language.

NOTES

I wish to express my obligations to Prof. S. R. Winchell, of Evanston, Illinois, for valuable suggestions and criticisms in connection with this work.

Many of the examples used herein are taken from the Atlantic Monthly, which has never ceased, since its foundation, to hold foremost rank among the literary periodicals of the world; and nowhere else, so far as I know, can one see the direct relation between punctuation and the meaning of language more fully exemplified, and I commend to the reader the pages of this magazine as an excellent source from which to draw illustrative examples of good punctuation and of the best current literature.

In order to make plain the meaning of some sentences used as examples, I have occasionally made slight changes in them, such, for instance, as substituting, for a pronoun in the sentence, the antecedent noun appearing in a sentence not in the quoted matter. To avoid the too frequent use of explanatory notes, I have sometimes changed, in a sentence which I wished to use, some mark of punctuation, which did not conform to the principles laid down herein, and which were not under consideration; but I have never changed a mark which I wished to use as an illustration.

I shall be glad to answer, if I am able to do so, any question that any reader of this work may desire to ask concerning punctuation, and also to receive notice of any errors, real or apparent, that any reader may find herein.

Letters may be addressed to me in care of the publishers of this book.

THE AUTHOR.

Minneapolis, December, 1896.

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INTRODUCTION.

The subject of punctuation is an exceedingly difficult one, because it deals with the finest shades of meaning possible in the arrangement of words in written language. The learned Judge Jeffrey, the first editor of the Edinburgh Review, called punctuation a department of literature. And yet, notwithstanding the difficulty of a mastery of the subject, it is very easy indeed to attain such a conception of marks, through the reasons for their uses, as to enable one to employ them in general composition almost as automatically as one spells, certainly as readily as one uses the period and the mark of interrogation. Such a knowledge can be obtained more readily from the treatise that deals exhaustively with the subject, than from the hand-book which gives only a few arbitrary rules.

The tendency among modern writers to use fewer marks is to be commended, provided they use language so perspicuous that few sign-boards be needed to guide the reader from subject to predicate and from modifier to word modified; but the tendency exemplified in the daily newspaper and the ephemeral magazine, to make the dash do the greater part of the work of punctuation, is a device of ignorance.

It is necessary in a treatise on punctuation to exemplify the principles underlying the closest use of marks common in the works of good writers, or essential in any style of composition. In order to do this, marks are used herein, both in the text and in many of the illustrative examples, somewhat more closely than it may be wise to use them in composition intended for readers with only a limited knowledge

of marks; but such treatment best develops the reasons underlying the science of punctuation, and best exhibits its value to the writer himself, as a constant guage of his language. The master of these reasons can readily determine when an apparently necessary mark may be omitted; and to him alone, if he wishes to observe the tendency above noted, may be given the advice of the judicious bishop to his clergy, as to the length of sermons,—"Err on the side of leniency."

CHAPTER I.

"Always read the preface [and the introduction] to a book. It places you on vantage ground, and enables you to survey more completely the book itself. You frequently also discover the character of the author from the preface. You see his aims, perhaps his prejudices. You see the point of view from which he takes his pictures, the rocks and impediments which he himself beholds, and you steer accordingly."—Bryan Waller Procter.

MEANING AND USE OF MARKS OF PUNCTUATION.

Whenever a mark of punctuation is used, it should convey a meaning; and that every mark may convey a meaning, every mark must have one, understood by the writer and by the reader. The meaning of a mark is what it signifies, what it says, to the reader when he meets it on the written or printed page.

The use of a mark of punctuation is determined by its meaning, and the meaning of the language which it governs. When these meanings, of marks and of language, are understood, the difficulties of punctuation disappear, for the proper mark then falls into its place as readily as the proper verb form falls into its place. No one hesitates whether to say "men run" or "men runs," because everyone knows that the plural form of the noun requires the plural form of the verb; nor does anyone hesitate about what mark to place after a word or a group of words asking a question, because everyone knows the meaning of the mark of interrogation, and the meaning of the language after which it is placed, whether such language be in the interrogative or the declarative form. Thus, one places the mark of interrogation after "John is coming," when intended to ask a question, as readily as after "Is John coming." But this exact knowledge of

marks seems to end with the mark of interrogation, extending not even to the period, as will appear when the consideration of that mark is reached. Many persons of superior education and of much culture, who know perfectly the meaning of language, cannot punctuate it; and perhaps not one author in a hundred fully punctuates his own matter, this task being left to the printer.

PURPOSES OF PUNCTUATION.

The purposes of punctuation are to reveal the real meaning of written or printed language, and to reveal such meaning to the reader at a glance. Marks accomplish these purposes by dividing language into groups of words, a mark indicating to the reader the relation of what follows it to what precedes it, and indicating such relation when the mark is reached, even before the language following the mark has been read.

From these purposes may be deduced a general definition, which becomes, in a measure, a general rule governing the use of marks.

GENERAL DEFINITION.

Marks of punctuation are used,—

1. To show the sense relations between words and groups of words.

2. To preserve the reader's continuity of thought.

Punctuation deals almost exclusively with groups of words, a group of words being considered as a "sentence element," frequently called herein a "term" as expressive of a part of a sentence. The function of such an element, or term, is that of some part of speech, and its relation to some other element is, consequently, one of the relations ascribed to the parts of speech in a sentence. Unless such relations are apprehended by the reader, the meaning of the language will not be obtained.

As the meaning of language does not very often depend solely upon its punctuation, a more important purpose of marks is so to reveal the meaning that the reader's attention will be

subject to the least possible strain from the machinery of language, and can thus be mostly centered on the thought. By preserving the reader's continuity of thought, punctuation results in what Herbert Spencer calls "economy of attention." It prevents the waste of mental energy that must come from an effort to ascertain what one's language means.

THE PRINCIPAL MARKS.

Of the ten or more marks of punctuation, the principal ones, which are closely related and which are to be considered together, are,—

1. The Comma..... .....(,)
2. The Semicolon..... .....(;)
3. The Colon..... .....(:)
4. The Period..... .....(.)

VALUES OF MARKS, AND THEIR USES.

Although each of these marks may be said to have an absolute and a relative value, such values are so indefinite, if not variable, as to defy accurate definition; yet for our purpose it may be said that the relative values of the principal marks are indicated by the order in which they stand above, the comma being at one extreme, and the period at the other.

A mark is used in accordance with its absolute value, when its use is determined by no other mark in the sentence; and a mark is used in accordance with its relative value, when its use is determined by some other mark or marks in the sentence.

In determining the punctuation of language, two things are essential:—

1. Where to use a mark.
2. What mark to use.

A clear thinker may know where a mark belongs, but not what mark to use; and although the more important of the two essential things just named is the first,—"where to

use a mark,"—which is determined by the meaning of the language to be punctuated, still it is very essential to know what mark to use.

Within certain limits there often may be a choice of marks; but such choice decreases, almost disappears, as one comprehends the values of marks, and the subtleties and beauties of language which they alone can make clear to the reader.

It is in consequence of this choice, and a lack of knowledge of the relative and absolute values of marks, that so great a variety of punctuation exists; and yet this variety is not so great, especially among good writers, as it appears, inasmuch as a variety in style of composition may demand a variety in punctuation, even when the grammatical construction seems, and is, identical. Besides, as will hereafter appear, a careful punctuator may not use marks as frequently and as closely in one composition as in another, or in one part of the same composition as in another; but the essential marks will never be omitted.

It has been well said that nothing is more suggestive of inexperience in writing than failure to throw overboard every mark that can be spared; but "what can be spared" is the complement of "what is essential," the nicest discrimination often being required to draw the line between them. Moreover, not even a comma should be omitted without a reason, and one cannot safely be omitted, except when the reasons for its use are outweighed by the reasons for its omission.

CHAPTER II.

THE COMMA.

SECTION I.—DISJUNCTIVE CHARACTER OF THE COMMA.

When the meaning of the comma is thoroughly understood, its place in the sentence is readily determined, provided the full force of every part of the sentence is apparent to the punctuator; for the purpose of every mark of punctuation, as has already been said, is to assist in conveying the meaning of written language by indicating the relations that exist between its parts, especially when such relations are liable to be mistaken, even momentarily. Therefore the first thing to be ascertained in the consideration of the comma, is, What does it say to the reader when he meets it on the printed page? A study of the mark properly used will best answer this question.

1. England and Scotland and Ireland are beautiful countries.

2. England and Scotland, and Ireland are beautiful islands.

These sentences are apparently identical in grammatical and logical construction; but to reveal the meaning of the latter at a glance, an explanatory sign is necessary. In 1 the conjunctions connect the words between which they stand. In 2 the first "and" connects the words between which it stands; but the second "and" does not connect "Scotland" and "Ireland,"—a fact that becomes obvious when it is known that there are only two islands named in the sen-

tence,—the island of "England and Scotland" and the island of "Ireland." *

In 1 three countries are named by three words, so that the apparent relations of the words between which the conjunctions stand are their real relations; but in 2 only two islands are named by the same three words, and thus the apparent relation of the words between which the second "and" stands is not their real relation, the real relation (co-ordination) being between an idea expressed by a group of words (England and Scotland) and an idea expressed by a single word (Ireland). To show this fact, the comma, a typographical sign-board, is used; and its use is clearly that of disjunction, just as the office of "and" is that of conjunction. When thus used together, the conjunction and the comma both connect and disconnect,—one connects the real thoughts of the sentence, the other disconnects the apparent thoughts.

This use of the comma before "and" may be shown diagrammatically.

a.....John and I.....
b.....John, and I.....
c.....him and me.....
d.....him, and I.....

In "a" and "c," however completed, the co-ordination can be between two thoughts expressed by single words only, and in "b" and "d" between two thoughts expressed by groups of words; and thus, before the blanks are filled out to make sentences, the relations of the parts of the sentences are indicated by the punctuation, or the absence of it. In "a" the relation of "John" and "I" to the supplied words will be the same, and will be that of subject or predicate; in "c" the relation will be the same, but will be that of object of verb or preposition. In "b" the relation will be different; and while "John" may be subject, predicate, or object in the first part of the sentence, "I" can be only subject in the second

*The reason for the absence of a comma after "Scotland" in this sentence will be given hereafter.

part. In "d" "him" can be object only, and "I" subject only. Thus:—

a. It was John and I whom you saw. On that occasion John and I walked together.

b. The story was told to John, and I heard it from him. The teacher accompanied John, and I went alone.

c. The story was told to John and me by a friend. The teacher accompanied John and me to the museum.

d. The officer spoke to him, and I at once left.

What, then, does the comma in "b" and "d" say? It says that the relations between "John" and "I" and between "him" and "I" are not the same as the relations between words similarly connected in "a" and "c." It says that "and" does not here connect single-word thoughts, but thoughts expressed by two groups of words; and its use gives notice of this fact. The comma in "b" says that one may not say, "The story was told to John and I," or "The teacher accompanied John and I," and, in "d," that one may not say, "The officer spoke to him and I," for "and" does not, in the above sentences, stand between co-ordinate words, that is, words governed alike.

Thus, the comma says that the apparent relations between these words are not their real relations, as they are in "a" and "c."

2-1. Respect the rights of children, and their mothers will respect you.

Without the comma in this sentence, its meaning would not be changed; but it would not be clear at the first reading, and therefore the reader's continuity of thought would be broken. The use of the comma here is to give the reader warning that the apparent relation of the words between which "and" stands is not their real relation, for "and" does not connect "children" and "mothers" as the object of the preposition "of," but co-ordinates other thoughts, which are respect given and respect received.

2-2. We soon approached the village, and the goal of our wanderings was reached.

In the absence of the comma, the sentence would read as if "the village" and "the goal" were approached; and the reader would have to return to the end of the first completed thought, here marked by the comma, to make the proper connection between the thoughts connected by "and."

2-3. In paganism light is mixed with darkness, and religion and truth are blended with superstition and error.

2-4. In paganism light is mixed with darkness, and with superstition and error are blended religion and truth.

In the absence of the commas from these two sentences, the same trouble would occur as in the one above, and so in all sentences similarly constructed.

RECAPITULATION.

First. In the foregoing illustrative examples, the comma is used only to aid the reader to obtain the sense without unnecessary effort, or, in other words, to preserve the continuity of thought (see General Definition, 2), for in the absence of the commas, the reader would have mistaken the meaning of the language, and having made wrong combinations of words, he would have been obliged to re-read a part of the sentence, in order to correct his error.

Second. It will also be observed that these illustrative sentences appear to establish the principle that the comma is used before "and" if it does not connect the words between which it immediately stands, and so put such words into like relation with what precedes or follows them, as illustrated in the skeleton sentences "b" and "d." But this is not a general principle, because, like every rule, it ignores the reasons for the use of the mark, which is simply a sign-board to be placed only where it is necessary to point out the right way and to prevent the reader's taking the wrong way. When there is no liability to mistake the meaning, no comma is used, even though "and" connects groups of words, as it does in the last clause of the sentence preceding this, and in the sen-

tence on page 14, referred to in a foot-note. This point will be fully discussed in its proper place; but the principle should be understood at the outset.

Third. Having thus shown the disjunctive character of the comma, and that it is merely a typographical sign-board, its further consideration, as well as that of all marks, becomes a study of the real relations between the parts of a sentence, in order to determine which of these relations may be mistaken, even momentarily, and which, therefore, become plainer if indicated by the comma or some other mark. This study will be one, not merely of the grammatical relations upon which rules are based, but of the sense (logical) relations, which determine the meaning of language. The test, then, will always be, What does the language mean? What does the punctuation mark, if used, say to the reader?

SECTION II.—SERIES, AND END OF SUBJECT.

3. England, Scotland, and Ireland are beautiful countries.

3-1. William, Henry, and Mary are at school.

3-2. William Henry and Mary are at school.

As no conjunction is used between the first and second words in the series, in 3 and 3-1, it is necessary to show that the relation between these words is not the apparent relation sustained by words thus standing together,—such relation, for instance, as exists between "William" and "Henry" in 3-2. This disconnection is marked by the comma, because of its disjunctive character. As only two persons are named in 3-2, the word "William" sustaining to the word "Henry" the adjective relation, no mark is permissible.

Many good writers omit the comma before the conjunction between the final terms in a series of three or more terms, and such writers would not, of course, use a comma before the "and" in 3 or 3-1; but this mode of punctuation always leaves the reader momentarily in doubt as to the real relation of the words between which the conjunction stands, because they may be parts of a compound term that is fol-

lowed by another term in the series, with the same conjunction before it. Thus:—

4. Among the earliest colleges established in America were Yale, Trinity, William and Mary, and Harvard.

4-1. Moses was born under oppression, reared and educated in the Egyptian court for forty years, further prepared by another forty years of lonely life in the desert, and then commanded to deliver his people from bondage.

The omission of the comma before the final conjunction in 4 would make the meaning obscure; and this mode of punctuation, though it may not always thus affect the meaning, will often produce a distractive effect in reading, because the reader cannot tell whether the conjunction marks the end of the series or simply stands in a compound term.

The omission of the comma before "and" in 3-1 would leave the sentence subject to two constructions: first, that three persons are named as being at school; second, that William is addressed, and told that Henry and Mary are at school. This is not a very good reason, if any reason at all, for the use of the comma before the last "and," except in sentences exactly like this one; but it serves to show how easily language may be misconstrued. The first reason is a strong one in favor of the use of the mark before the final conjunction; and, besides, the best punctuators so use it.

Very frequently a series consists wholly of compound terms, the words being grouped according to some obvious meaning. In such cases each group is set off by commas. Thus:—

5. Father and son, prince and subject, stranger and citizen, are correlative terms.

5-1. There are no better cosmetics than a severe temperance and purity, modesty and humility, a gracious temper and calmness of spirit.

These terms are treated as if they were single words, and are, therefore, separated by commas; but as the grouping is

determined by the sense, the different terms will not always be composed of the same number of principal words.

6. The earth, the water, the air, are filled with animal life.

Several reasons may be given for the use of the comma before the verb when the subject is composed of a series of terms without a final conjunction to bind them together; but perhaps the best reason is that given by a distinguished critic for his constant guide in the use of commas. He said he used a comma whenever the sentence had to be read "commatically." This is about equivalent to saying that he used a comma whenever he "felt" the need of it. Although such a statement may seem very indefinite, it enunciates a fundamental principle of knowledge; for one must know some things so thoroughly that he instinctively "feels" concerning them what he may not always readily ascribe to a rule or a principle. This writer did not mean that a comma is used wherever a rhetorical pause is required, but wherever, in reading aloud or silently, one must momentarily pause to group together the words that make a separate part of the thought,—a group that was called by the ancient rhetoricians "a comma," and which now requires to be set off by the mark of punctuation taking its name from this group of words.

In the absence of a conjunction to mark the end of the series, the group of words constituting the subject needs to be marked off; and such is the office of the comma before the verb in 5 and 6. In like manner and for the same reason, the comma is often needed to identify a subject that is not composed of a series of terms; but, it should be observed, it is the character, and not solely the length, of the subject, that determines such use of the mark. It is particularly required when the last word of the subject is liable to be mistaken for the subject of the verb. Thus:—

7. He who sees a building as a common spectator, contents himself with speaking of it in the most general terms.

Here the comma is, as always, a sign-board, warning the

reader that "spectator" is not the subject of "contents," as it appears to be, and as it might be made, temporarily at least. If the subject is very long, the liability to error in this direction is increased, and therefore the comma may be required because of the length of the subject.

RECAPITULATION.

In the foregoing illustrative examples, it may be said that commas have been used for the following reasons:—

In 3 the first comma is used to disconnect two words whose relation has not been revealed to the reader by anything that precedes the mark, and which words do not sustain to each other any of the apparent relations of words standing together. The second comma is used to show that the words between which it stands do not constitute a compound term, as do the similar words in 2, and words similarly connected in 4.

In 3-1 the first comma is used to show that "William" is not an adjective, as it is in 3-2.

In 5 the commas are used to disconnect words not connected in thought, and thus the mark separates groups of words, as it separated single words in 3.

In 5 and 6 the last mark is used to set off a group of words constituting "a comma," made necessary to give the notice usually given by a conjunction at the end of a group.

In 3-1 the meaning of the language is changed by the use of the first comma; but in the other sentences the use of the marks is to preserve the reader's continuity of thought, agreeably to the requirement of part 2 of the General Definition.

The reader should fix firmly in his mind the meaning of "continuity of thought," for the term will be used frequently. Continuity of thought is an unbroken line of thought. If one analyzes his thoughts as conveyed to him by written or printed language, he will see that certain combinations of words suggest what is to follow, and that the implied thought often anticipates the written word. If, then, the language is such as to suggest a certain line of thought, and yet does not express such thought, but turns aside, such turning aside should

be indicated, if possible, in order to prevent a distractive effect upon the reader,—an effect that always lessens the impression made upon the mind by language. This suggestive character of language is seen, with special emphasis, in the skeleton sentences on a preceding page; and it is this principle that determines the choice of marks when the relative values are considered, as will be seen in subsequent chapters.

SECTION III.—OR.

All that has been said in regard to the punctuation of sentences containing "and" is equally applicable to similar sentences containing "or," for both are co-ordinate conjunctions, and have like uses.

8. We do not care to discuss his guilt or innocence, or the excuses he makes for his defalcation.

This sentence is in every respect similar to 2, "guilt or innocence" being a compound term, which names one of the topics open for discussion. The comma shows that the apparent relation between "innocence" and "excuses" is not the real relation, the co-ordination being between "excuses" and the compound term of which "innocence" is a part. The use of a comma before the first "or," or its omission before the second, would give the sentence three terms, three subjects for discussion, which the meaning of the language precludes.

9. The ticket will admit a man, or a woman and a child.
9-1. The ticket will admit a man or a woman, and a child.
9-2. The ticket will admit a man or woman and a child.

In 9 the ticket will admit a man (one person), or it will admit a woman and a child (two persons). In 9-1 the ticket will admit a man and a child (two persons), or it will admit a woman and a child (two persons); and in 9-2 it will admit the same.

In 9 and 9-1 the commas divide the words into groups according to the meaning to be expressed; but in 9-2 the

article "a" is so used as to render the comma unnecessary, governing, as it does, two words, so that a comma before "and" would be simply superfluous, and without effect upon the meaning.

The meaning of these sentences, particularly 9-2, might be made clearer to some readers by substituting for "a" its equivalent, "one." Thus:—

9-3. The ticket will admit one man or woman and one child.

Both "or" and "and" are frequently used in a sense that requires a mode of punctuation seemingly at variance with our general principle, and which does constitute an exception to all rules; but such punctuation serves to illustrate and emphasize the general principle, namely, that punctuation distinguishes the real from the apparent meaning of language.

10. Dr. Brown administers laughing-gas, or nitrous oxide.
10-1. Dr. Smith administers ether or chloroform.

These words are often seen on the signs of dentists who administer anesthetics for the painless extraction of teeth; but the former sentence is rarely ever punctuated correctly. Although the sentences are alike in grammatical construction, the comma is required in the former to show that an apparent relation is not the real relation. "Or" is defined (see Century Dictionary) as a "disjunctive conjunction coordinating two or more words or clauses each one of which in turn is regarded as excluding consideration of the other: as, your money or your life; this road or that." Thus, it will be seen, when "or" is used in its real sense, "either" may be used with it, as an introductory correlative, without changing the meaning of the language; as, "I demand either your money or your life."

Without changing the meaning of his language, Dr. Smith may say that he administers either ether or chloroform; but Dr. Brown may not say that he administers either laughing-gas or nitrous oxide, because he administers only one anesthetic, which is called either laughing-gas or nitrous oxide,—

one being its common, the other its scientific, name. Hence it is plain that the sentences are not logically alike, and that the apparent relation between the words connected by "or" in 10 is not their real relation. This fact is indicated to the eye by the use of the comma, just as it was in 2, where the mark was first met.

This sentence so fully illustrates a fundamental principle of punctuation, that it is well, although the subject has been referred to, to dwell further upon it, in order more fully to emphasize it. The sense is complete at "laughing-gas," and what is added is only for explanation, not for limitation or qualification; and therefore the completion of the thought is properly indicated by a mark of punctuation. Such an additional thought, having no essential connection with the primary assertion made by the sentence, is essentially parenthetical; and all such words were formerly, and are still by some writers, put within marks of parenthesis.

A similar use of the comma between words connected by "and" or "or" expresses a shade of meaning, often very beautiful, which must be entirely lost to the reader unfamiliar with this office of the comma, as the language itself does not reveal the meaning.

11. My dear Joseph, they've put you on the committee for examining old documents.

Why couldn't "they" have put on the town clerk, or Parson White?

The meaning is, not either the clerk or the parson, but the clerk or even the parson, the comma showing that the parson is added as an after-thought. It shows, just as does the word "even," that the writer is unwilling to admit equal fitness for the position between the clerk and the parson. This use of the comma is a sort of qualified co-ordination, as it is in 10.

11-1. On these occasions I have been grateful to the happy accident, or design, that made me a participant in such scenes.

If this sentence were addressed to the supposed author of the opportunity furnished the speaker to take part in pleasant scenes, its meaning would be fully shown by a different punctuation, which would but slightly change the sense. Thus:—

11-2. On these occasions I have been grateful to the happy accident—or design?—that made me a participant in such scenes.

It does not, by any means, follow that the omission of the marks in 11, 11-1, and 11-2, would be improper punctuation. Such omission would simply change the shade of meaning so well expressed by the marks.

11-3. We have learned, or ought to have learned, by this time, that the use of a mark of punctuation often depends wholly upon the sense of the language, and not upon grammatical construction or arbitrary rules.

The parenthetical after-thought is clearly expressed in the above sentence in the modified assertion introduced by "or"; and that this second term is not an alternative of what precedes it, is very clear, or ought to be.

SECTION IV.—MODIFIERS.

It has already been seen that the comma serves to indicate groups of words required by the sense to be considered together. This use of the mark is very important, because it is very extensive and because upon it the meaning of language often depends.

12. Hurrah for Tippecanoe, and Tyler too.

12-1. Hurrah for Tippecanoe and Tyler too.

As the word "too" signifies "in addition," "likewise," the meaning of the sentence in which it occurs can be known only when the words are so grouped as to show what thought is "in addition" to a preceding thought. In 12 there are two groups. As the comma puts "too" in the second, this group expresses a thought "in addition" to a thought expressed in

the first; the meaning of the sentence being, hurrah for Tyler, in addition to hurrah for Tippecanoe.

In 12-1 the absence of a mark shows that all the words constitute one group, and that, therefore, the hurrah is for both Tippecanoe and Tyler, in addition to a hurrah for someone else.

As a matter of historical fact, the punctuation of 12 is correct, the expression having originated in the presidential campaign of 1840, when the hero of Tippecanoe was the idol of his party, and all its enthusiasm centered in him.

13. Nine Supreme Court judges appointed since Grant's first inauguration have died, or resigned on pensions.

13-1. No expenditure under the law has been necessary, as all the judges have died or resigned before reaching the age of retirement on pension.

In the absence of the comma in 13, "on pensions" reaches back to "died," just as "before reaching the age of retirement on pension" does in 13-1; but in the former sentence as the adverbial phrase "on pensions" does not qualify the first verb, it should be cut off from it by the comma, for judges do not "die on pensions." Of course everybody knows this; but the reader has to think of it in the absence of the comma, and in doing so his thought is turned aside. Therefore we say a comma is required before "or" in 13 to restrict "on pensions" to "resigned."

14. There had been a difference of opinion between Emperor William, and Prince Henry of Prussia.

This sentence appeared in a London journal, and had no comma before "and," thus making the writer say that William is Emperor of Prussia, instead of Germany, because without the comma the adjective "of Prussia" modifies the two preceding nouns.

14-1. He wrote part of the Preface, and Chapter I.

Without a comma before "and," he wrote a part of the Preface and a part of Chapter I.; with the comma, he wrote a part of the Preface, and all of Chapter I.

14-2. His first problem is the growth of large fortunes, and the collocation of wealth and poverty in large cities.

If the "problem" includes the growth of large fortunes, wherever it occurs, the punctuation is correct; but if only the growth of large fortunes in large cities is to be considered, it is incorrect, as will appear in the next chapter.

15. Arriving in London, I draped my windows, covered the furniture, and hung the walls with the stars and stripes.

It would be interesting to know what impression this sentence conveys to the average reader, or even to a careful one, as it is a type of sentences found in the works of well-known writers, the meaning of which sentences is often left in doubt, neither the language itself nor the punctuation telling just what the writer intends to say.

While draping windows and covering furniture with the stars and stripes may seem an unusual performance, yet, evidently, the writer intended to say that windows were draped with the stars and stripes, furniture was covered with the stars and stripes, and the walls were hung with the stars and stripes. But suppose the writer wished to confine the use of the stars and stripes to the walls, how would the sentence be punctuated or modified to show this? In two ways, as shown in the following sentences:—

15-1. I draped my windows and covered the furniture, and hung the walls with the stars and stripes.

15-2. I draped my windows, covered the furniture, hung the walls with the stars and stripes.

The meaning of 15-1 is perfectly clear, and cannot be mistaken. And the meaning of 15-2 is equally clear to persons familiar with the use of marks; but the construction is not so common as that of 15 and 15-1.

The language of 15-2 may be made to convey the same meaning as in 15, by the insertion of a comma after "walls." Thus:—

15-3. I draped my windows, covered the furniture, hung the walls, with the stars and stripes.

As in 5 and 6 the comma after "walls" marks the end of a group of terms that have a common relation to what follows; and therefore "with the stars and stripes" belongs to each of the verbs, and the meaning is the same as in 15.

It is not necessary or well to carry this principle into the punctuation of all groups of words. For instance, throughout this work no comma is used in the following expressions: "A word and a group of words," "A word or a group of words." The comma is omitted because there is no liability to mistake on the part of the reader, the language so clearly showing the meaning. For the same reason the comma might be omitted in 13; but its presence shows that such a modifier as that in 13-1 is not to follow, and it is well to use it for this purpose. It is well to note the tendency among modern writers to drop the comma in all such places; but the danger in doing so should not be overlooked.

EXAMPLES.

Point out which commas in these examples are used agreeably to the reasons discussed in the preceding pages.

Genius finds its own road, and carries its own lamp.

The berries were crushed, or had fallen from their stems.

Once more, and with deepening force, does the question arise.

Be the first to say what is self-evident, and you are immortal.

Two articles, or kinds of articles, stand out prominently in the list of exports.

I will speak of the glorious honor of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous works.

Serene, and safe from passion's stormy rage, how calm they glide into the port of Age!

These, and a hundred others which will occur to everyone, are marked instances of adaptation to environment.

The so-called revolutions of Holland, England, and America, are all links of one chain.

I knew what beauty was, and even my childish soul understood what power, triumph, pleasure, might be.

In order to obtain a copious vocabulary, Pliny advised translating Greek into Latin, or Latin into Greek.

He may seem inconsistent, digressive, unstable, in his ways of living, but he must not mind the mere seeming.

Regret for the past, grief at the present, and anxiety respecting the future, are plagues which affect most men.

We call a thing a blessing because it happens to fit our desires, or, at least, our ideas of what a blessing ought to be.

Stopped at once by the ready manoeuver, and the fire that brought it on their flank, the horsemen wheeled again and retreated.

They laud the commission's report, and exult in its conclusions as the final vindication of their own motives and methods.

Of the family of the Sheridans, Moore said, and said truly, that they were "the pride of the palace, the bower, and the hall."

We are now engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure.

For this stream of apt illustrations Macaulay was indebted to his extraordinary memory, and his rapid eye for contrasts and analogies.

Belmont was severely criticised at the North as a wholly unnecessary battle, barren of results, or the possibility of them from the beginning.

In his successes and his failures, in his greatness and his littleness, Burns is ever clear, simple, true, and glitters with no lustre but his own.

Any one who possesses, or desires to possess, enlightened discrimination between what a writer says and appears to say, must understand language.

Novels, romances, poetry, plays, opera, all things that could stimulate their imaginations and lift them out of the monotonous routine of life, are strictly prohibited.

Though he professed to teach Hebrew in two sessions, with the elements of Chaldee and Syriac, and, I think, Arabic in addition, the amount of linguistic instruction he gave was very small.

The poet Willis, who was much interested in fine society in his time, said he had observed that the best bred company does not permit sensations and adjectives, or surprises or extravagances of any kind.

The speech was a strong and emphatic condemnation of the silly utopianism, the dangerous financial theories, the utter impotency as a governing power, of this doctrine, and a notice that it will not be tolerated in this state.

Owing to the double nature of the artist, four logical possibilities arise. He may be a good man and a disnonest artist, or a bad man and an honest artist, or a bad man and a dishonest artist, or a good man and an honest artist.

Goldenrod was massed by the roadside in tints to match every shade of our leafy carpet, making for it a gorgeous border of gold color, and asters contrasted or harmonized, with their hues of mauve, blue, purple, lavender, and white.

Life may be held so pure, so receptive to all high influences, so noble in its aspirations, as to furnish the right conditions for these finer promptings; or it may so degenerate into the material, the selfish, the self-centered, as to become deaf and blind and unresponsive to them.

SECTION V.—INTERMEDIATE EXPRESSIONS.

In order to express thought clearly, and that it may be extracted from the printed page readily, the relations between the principal words of a sentence must be made clear. The simplest way of doing this is to put such words close together, and in their natural order; but this course would often preclude the use of qualifying elements, and render impossible emphasis that arises from the position of words. To make clear a connection obscured by words intervening between related parts, is one of the principal offices of punctuation. This office may be illustrated by a somewhat uncommon use of the hyphen.

16. Between flood- and ebb-tide there is a moment of arrest called slack water.

The hyphen after "flood" notifies the reader that the complete word-idea is not expressed, and that he is to hold in suspense the incomplete idea until he reaches the complement of this word, which, of course, is "tide."

Perhaps a better illustration may be given by actually suspending the words which intervene between the points where the sense of the main sentence is suspended, and where it is taken up again.

17. The prisoner was a convicted thief.
said the witness

The principal parts of this sentence are put in the upper line, and the meaning of the unqualified sentence cannot be mistaken; but if the suspended words be introduced into the sentence, and their relation to the other parts be not shown by marks of punctuation, the sense will be changed, the witness becoming the thief. If, then, it is desired to express by marks of punctuation the sense expressed in the diagramed sentence, it should be written as follows:—

17-1. The prisoner, said the witness, was a convicted thief.

A like change in sense is shown in the two following sentences:—

18. Boys, like men, may be courageous for principle's sake.

18-1. Boys like Henry never fail in college.

In 17-1 and 18 the words set off by commas are said to be out of their natural order, and they are subject to misconstruction in the absence of marks to show this fact. Words are said to be in their natural order when the subject precedes the verb, and the adjective the noun, or when a word is as near as may be to the word it qualifies or belongs to. It is sometimes difficult to say just what the natural order is; but it is generally certain that when a word is so placed that it may qualify a word to which it does not belong, and yet make sense, the order is not the natural order, and some mark of punctuation is required to indicate the meaning the writer wishes to convey. In 18-1 "like Henry" may seem to be out of its natural order, because an adjective generally precedes the noun it qualifies; but the usual order for adjectives formed like this one, or for a similar adjective phrase, is after the noun, and in the absence of a mark indicating the contrary, they will always be read as if they belonged to the noun next to which they stand. In order to show that "like men," in 18, does not belong to "boys," the first comma is used, and to indicate the end of the element the second is required. This disconnects "like men" from "boys," and compels the words to find connection elsewhere, in accordance with the meaning of the language. It makes them an adverb qualifying the entire sentence, or that part of it which expresses an act. The comma's function of transferring a qualification from one part of a sentence to another, is, of course, confined to elements capable of such transposition. In most cases the commas are used to simplify the construction, and to render obvious that which might otherwise be obscure.

19. Much of this work was written, and some of it was printed, years ago.

This sentence is practically identical, in construction, with 16, because "years ago" is just as essential to what precedes the first comma as "tide" to "flood," the commas simply taking the place of the hyphens and carrying the suspended meaning over intervening words. This punctuation also shows that "years ago" belongs to "was written," and not exclusively to "was printed," as it would appear to in the absence of the second comma. The context shows that "was printed" takes the same modification; but we shall leave it to the grammarians to decide whether "years ago" qualifies both verbs or is understood after one of them. The necessity for this punctuation is unmistakable, and any other will frequently cause distractive effect, if not obscurity in meaning.

It may be said, with perhaps even more force, that in all these sentences each comma is required for the one reason upon which the whole science of punctuation is based, at least so far as it pertains to the use of the comma, which reason is found in the meaning already given to the comma by calling it a "disjunction." As such it is required to indicate the disconnection between the words where used. This point is more clearly illustrated in the following sentence, taken from a U. S. Government Bulletin:—

20. The city of Caracas, the capital of Venezuela, lies 7 miles south of and 3,018 feet above the level of the Caribbean.

Is this city "south of the level," as it is "above the level"? If not, how is the reader to tell when he reaches the word governed by "south of"? As "and" does not here co-ordinate the words between which it immediately stands, or any group of words readily apparent to the reader, he needs a guide-board to carry him through the labyrinth of words; and such a guide-board is the comma, or two commas. With a comma after the first "of," which requires an object to complete the sense, just as "flood," in 16, requires another word to make sense, the reader suspends the thought until notice that the end of the intervening words is reached, where he expects

to find the object of the preposition. Therefore the sentence, containing proper guide-boards, will read as follows:—

20-1. The city of Caracas, the capital of Venezuela, lies 7 miles south of, and 3,018 feet above the level of, the Caribbean.

It would be better still to recast the sentence as follows:—

20-2. The city of Caracas, the capital of Venezuela, lies 7 miles south of the Caribbean, and 3,018 feet above its level.

21. If, they say, he cannot get the presidential nomination, give him the vice-presidency.

"If," not being connected with "they say," requires the comma to disconnect it, and the comma is likewise required after "say." Therefore these commas are required for two reasons,—to disconnect words and to set off an intermediate and transposed term.

It is interesting to note the emphasis gained by the transposition in the following sentence, and also how the meaning would be changed if the first comma were omitted:—

22. Hastings clearly discerned, what was hidden from most of his contemporaries, that such a state of things gave an immense advantage to a ruler of great talents and few scruples.

The comma after "discerned" causes the reader to center his thought on what is to be the object of "discerned"—what did Hastings discern? The words that precede this object serve to emphasize its importance by exciting the reader's curiosity in showing that it was not seen by others. Remove the comma, and the sense will not be changed; but the emphasis will be, because then the reader will set up a comparison between the discernment of Hastings and that of his contemporaries,—a comparison that is merely incidental to the sentence as written. The apparent connection between "discerned" and "what was hidden" is broken by the comma; and thus we discover again that the reason

for its use lies in the fundamental principle of punctuation, which should never be lost sight of.

The use of an intermediate term for the sake of emphasis or contrast is very common; and the punctuation of such sentences follows that of 22, although a slight variation in the sentence may point to the omission of one of the commas. "His success was attained by friendly assistance," needs no marks; but if an intermediate term be introduced, the sentence requires the marks. Thus:—

22-1. His success was attained, not by ability and enterprise, but by friendly assistance.

The formation of the intermediate term throws the contrasting "but" into the main part of the sentence; so that the intermediate words, if suppressed, would not leave a perfectly formed sentence, yet no other punctuation will reveal the meaning so clearly.

The two following sentences serve to show how the reader would be lost in the absence of the second comma:—

23. I endeavored to show, as far as figures could show, the real value of the property.

23-1. I endeavored to show, as far as figures could show the real value of the property, that the railroad was insolvent.

The intermediate group of words often requires commas between its parts, thus bringing more than two commas between the parts of the main sentence. Ordinarily, however, the context clearly shows that the additional comma so used does not end the intermediate group; but this is not always the case, and it is, therefore, better to avoid, as much as possible, the use of marks in intermediate terms.

24. That bright and tranquil stream, the boundary of Louth and Meath, having flowed many miles between green banks crowned by modern palaces, and by ruined keeps of old Norman barons of the pale, is here about to mingle with the sea.

The comma after "palaces," separating the parts of a group of words which is itself set off by commas, is used according to rule, and apparently according to the principles exemplified in Sentence 2; but "and" here connects two groups of words formed alike, and beginning with the same word, which, when repeated after "and," gives notice to the reader that the connection is between two such groups. In other words, the repeated preposition (by) answers the purpose of a comma by precluding the possibility of even momentary mistake; and it further serves to decrease the reader's distraction, for it removes the necessity for an extra comma, which might be mistaken for the one that ends the group.

Inasmuch as every mark of punctuation must be considered by the reader, the presence of an unnecessary mark adds to the distractive effect inseparable from reading. Therefore this principle of omission—namely, to omit the mark when the nature of the language or the presence of other signs surely prevents even a momentary misconception of the relations of the words—is an important one, because it enables a writer to throw overboard many unnecessary marks.

Sentence 24 is from Macaulay, and the punctuation is that followed in all the editions of his works consulted by me; but the reasons for the omission of the comma after "palaces" are so strong I do not hesitate to say that the purpose of punctuation is better served by such omission. The presence of another intermediate term, set off by commas after "stream" and "Meath," gives additional force to the general reason, as the use of commas before and after such term adds to the distractive effect.

As corrected the sentence would read thus:—

24-a. That bright and tranquil stream, the boundary of Louth and Meath, having flowed many miles between green banks crowned by modern palaces and by ruined keeps of old Norman barons of the pale, is here about to mingle with the sea.

In the next sentence this principle may be pushed beyond

its application in 24; and in so doing two commas are thrown overboard. Let us first look at the sentence as it appears in a law journal, its punctuation being in strict accord with rule.

25. The use of property by the hirer, during the term, for a different purpose, or in a different manner, from that which was intended by the parties, will not amount to conversion.

Here are five commas intervening between the subject and the predicate of the sentence. It will be seen at once that those after "hirer" and "term" are indispensable, because they set off a group of words out of its natural order, and also prevent an apparent but false relation between the words disconnected by them. There are two reasons as well as two rules for the use of the comma before "or" in this sentence: it connects a group of words, and, together with the comma after "manner," it sets off an intermediate term (see Sentences 2 and 19). Notwithstanding these reasons, the similarity of these groups of words, connected by "or" and beginning with "for" and "in," respectively, so readily notifies the reader of their relation that the sentence will read more smoothly without the comma than with it. An examination of the mental process required in reading the sentence will show this more clearly. There are four intermediate groups of words to be adjusted by the reader. The three between the words "term" and "will" must be fused into one; and this must be done instantaneously in the mind while holding two other groups (the preceding ones), which are to be considered in relation to what the reader knows will follow a certain comma that is to pair with one already reached. This is the process that is to be compared with that of determining the relations of the three groups with the comma before "or" omitted, whose omission carries with it the omission of that after "manner," as they constitute a pair, one being useless without the other. The mental process in this case is that involved in determining the relation of the group of words following "manner" to "purpose" and "manner," for this group is connected with each of those words. My own conclusion is that the distractive

effort in reading the sentence without the commas is far less than in reading it with them, and that, consequently, the meaning of the sentence, with the two commas omitted, is more readily and easily obtained. I would, then, punctuate the sentence as follows:—

25-a. The use of property by the hirer, during the term, for a different purpose or in a different manner from that which was intended by the parties, will not amount to conversion.

The reader will observe that this argument has been confined to the punctuation of a subdivided intermediate term. It may be applied to the punctuation of any group of words; but the principle of omission of marks should not be pushed as far in the principal, as in the intermediate, group.

There is a large class of sentences which are easily punctuated in accordance with the reasons already exemplified, provided the meaning of the language is carefully considered; but perhaps nowhere else will so great a variety of punctuation be found as in this class, even though the punctuation be that of good writers and proof-readers.

26. This capital does not make him independent, or, I should say, even aspiring.

"I should say" is an intermediate group of words requiring to be set off by commas. It has no relation to the comma before "or," except that it suggests the character of the adjective "aspiring," which is an after-thought, requiring the comma before "or" because we may not say "either independent or even aspiring," as the words express ideas too closely connected in meaning to be thus treated as alternatives, like, for instance, the words "independent" and "servile."

The position of "I should say" should be noted. We need not discuss what words, if any, are understood and to be supplied; but the words used can be put nowhere else, and express the writer's meaning. If they are made the last words in the sentence, whatever be the punctuation, they will seem to relate to both adjectives or to the entire sentence.

A writer should always bear in mind that every conjunction connects; and if he would have the meaning of his language clear and unmistakable, he must show by the punctuation, or the absence of it, just what his conjunctions connect.

The meaningless punctuation in some of the following sentences will show the necessity for this warning:—

27. We are not willing to give our sanction to the broad, and, when applied in a case like that at bar, harsh, rule of the instruction.

28. The arguments are manifestly, and to my mind overwhelmingly superior.

29. He draws a circle on a chest, or, if that is not convenient, the deck.

29-1. To do this gigantic work at all, education, like other industries of civilization, has had to organize its methods so as to give a good average "mill product," or perhaps we might say, mintage.

30. In the lower, or, as it would be better to call them, the easier grades of work.

31. It is a matter of mere whim, or, worse, of economy.

32. Untrammelled physical motions may here perfectly express the feelings that elsewhere have to stay unexpressed, or be, at best, imperfectly expressed by a trammeled tongue.

Here, indeed, is a variety of punctuation; and it would require an ingenious person to deduce, from these half dozen sentences, rules or reasons governing the use of marks in them.

The punctuation of 27 is technically (by rule) correct, but is unnecessarily close. In forming the sentence, the writer apparently had in mind that a number of words would come between his adjective (broad) and the noun qualified by it; and therefore he here used the comma. The next two commas properly set off a transposed and intermediate term; and then comes the comma (after "harsh") required to close the group whose opening was marked by the comma after "broad." "And" here co-ordinates two simple adjectives which do

not require separation any more because of the intermediate transposed words than they would with such words omitted, so long as they have no bearing upon the real relation of the co-ordinate words, as in 26. The sense may be illustrated by the substitution of a single word for the intermediate group of words; thus, " * * * the broad and 'sometimes' harsh rule," which, of course, does not require commas.

The construction of 28 is identical with that of 27, except that "and" co-ordinates two adverbs, instead of two adjectives; and therefore the comma before "and" should be omitted, and commas inserted after "and" and "mind."

Sentence 29 finds its model in 26, "deck" being, not an alternative of "chest," but an after-thought, requiring the comma before "or." A comma is required after "or," to set off the intermediate term, because "or" cannot be made, under any construction of the language, to connect "if that," etc., with what precedes.

Sentence 29-1 is essentially the counterpart of 29, and is given here to show that "say," in such a sentence, does not take, as an object, the word following it.

"Or" in 30 performs the office exemplified in 10; and therefore the comma is required before it, and after the word that is substituted for "lower," which is "easier." Commas thus setting off "easier" would at once show it to be a substitute for "lower," and would indicate the true relation between the words.

The punctuation of 31 is very peculiar; and unless it be a typographical error, it is quite unaccountable in a writer who stops, even for a moment, to consider the relations of words, or who punctuates at all. "Or" connects "of mere whim" and "of economy"; but as the latter is an after-thought, not an alternative, the comma is required before "or." "Worse" is an intermediate word requiring to be set off by commas, without regard to the comma before "or."

The punctuation of 32 would be correct if the sentence ended at "expressed"; but "by a trammeled tongue" needs to be cut off from what precedes "or," which is done by the use of the comma before "or" (see 13).

As corrected the sentences will read as follows:—

27-a. We are not willing to give our sanction to the broad and, when applied in a case like that at bar, harsh rule of the instruction.

28-a. The arguments are manifestly and, to my mind, overwhelmingly superior.

29-a. He draws a circle on a chest, or, if that is not convenient, the deck.

29-1-a. To do this gigantic work at all, education, like other industries of civilization, has had to organize its methods so as to give a good average "mill product," or, perhaps we might say, mintage.

30-a. In the lower, or, as it would be better to call them, the easier, grades of work.

31-a. It is a matter of mere whim, or, worse, of economy.

32-a. Untrammeled physical motions may here perfectly express the feelings that elsewhere have to stay unexpressed, or be, at best, imperfectly expressed by a trammeled tongue.

There is another large class of sentences containing intermediate clauses, whose punctuation depends upon the relations shown by conjunctions; and it follows that the punctuation of them materially affects their meaning.

33. The prisoner will be pardoned because, I know, he is innocent.

33-1. The prisoner will be pardoned because I know he is innocent.

The composition of 33 is not to be commended; but as the sentence is illustrative of a class of sentences one constantly meets, it is here used to show the real meaning of such language.

In 33-1 the assertion is, that the pardon will be granted because "I," who grant pardons, possess knowledge of his innocence; in 33 the assertion is, that the pardon will be granted because of the innocence of the prisoner, "I know" being purely parenthetical and intermediate, and referring simply to the clause in which it stands.

The next two sentences will further illustrate the same point, i. e., the exact meaning of qualifying statements:—

34. He is in doubt about the best course to pursue; but, I am sure, his doubts will soon disappear.

34-1. He is in doubt about the best course to pursue; but I am sure as to what is best for me.

In 34-1 "but" puts in contrast his doubts and my certainty, but in 34 it marks the contrast between doubts present and doubts disappeared.

If no commas be used in 34, the first impression given by the words following "but" must be the same as in 34-1. The more common form of this sentence is the following:—

34-2. He is in doubt about the best course to pursue; but I am sure that his doubts will soon disappear.

In this sentence the contrast is not between "he is in doubt" and "I am sure," but is between that which precedes the mark and all that follows it. It is, therefore, evident that, as the reader may mistake the meaning of the sentence, the construction is not so good as that of 34.

In the next sentence the contrasting clause, beginning with "but," might adopt the construction of that in 34-2, and, in so doing, omit the commas; but such change would put the contrast between "called" and "denied," although "called," with its object, expresses only part of the meaning of the member of the sentence in which it stands.

35. He was not a great man, and could hardly be called a great leader; but, it cannot be denied, he was a great force in our national life.

To say "but it cannot be denied that" would seemingly ignore "he was not a great man," by directing attention to a contrast between "could hardly be called" and "it cannot be denied." By setting off with commas "it cannot be denied," the thought expressed before "but" is held in suspense for its contrast with "he was a great force in our national life."

The punctuation of subordinate clauses similar to the above is a very interesting subject, as it reveals the subtleties of language perhaps more clearly than the punctuation of any other class of sentences. The subject will be dealt with in a later chapter.

As some punctuators do not use two commas to set off intermediate terms, the following sentence illustrates a difficulty that such punctuators cannot overcome:—

36. He could be distinctly heard by ten, or twenty, thousand people.

If both commas were omitted, the language would be construed to mean "either ten thousand or twenty thousand," which, however, does not express the writer's exact thought, although stating the exact truth. With the second comma omitted, the meaning would be, "he could be distinctly heard by ten people or twenty thousand people," because "or" would then connect the adjectives "ten" and "twenty thousand," the word "people" being understood after "ten."

The form of expression, as found in 36, indicates an afterthought, which determines the use of the first comma, and this comma requires the second, thus making an intermediate expression.

The meaning of the language may be exactly expressed by a slight change in its form. Thus:—

36-1. He could be distinctly heard by ten, or even twenty, thousand people.

Not a few writers would inclose the added word or words in marks of parenthesis, in order to show that "or" is not used in its usual sense, which was defined in the consideration of Sentence 10. This would make the sentence read as follows:—

36-2. He could be distinctly heard by ten (or twenty) thousand people.

While this leaves no doubt as to the meaning of the sentence, it is an unnecessary use of these marks, and not to be commended.

In determining whether or not to set off intermediate words by commas, it must be remembered that it is not the length of such groups of words upon which the punctuation depends, but the degree of coalescence with the other parts of the sentence—the smoothness with which all the different parts fit together. Although the degree of such coalescence requiring the use of the marks may not be defined, it is not difficult to learn, as one is continually dealing with it while attempting to write clearly or to read understandingly. Our next chapter deals very largely with it, and yet does not mention it; and so on throughout this volume.

One feature of the principles we are endeavoring to establish, as distinguished from rules, is worthy special attention. It is this: The need of a mark, and the mark to be used, are generally suggested at the point in the sentence where the mark is to be put, regardless of any mark that is to follow.

We are now dealing with pairs of commas, and it has been said that the first one requires the second. This is not strictly true, because, generally, the second comma is required to mark a disconnection quite as obvious as that marked by the first. This is well illustrated in 17, in which it is as essential to disconnect "witness" from "was" as to disconnect "prisoner" from "said." In each case a noun is apparently the subject of the verb following it; and to show that this apparent relation is not the real relation, the commas are used. In this case, and in all sentences under consideration in this Section, the commas are said to be used in pairs, and to set off a group of words called an intermediate term.

The term "intermediate" may be applied to a large number of single words and groups of words that do not appear analogous to anything herein considered. The term itself so clearly shows the necessity for the punctuation, that it is not worth while to attempt to give a model for every word and group of words to which it is applicable.

SECTION VI.—RESTRICTIVE AND EXPLANATORY TERMS.

The difference in meaning between a sentence containing a word or group of words used to restrict the sense of the word qualified, and the same sentence with the same word or group of words used merely to explain the sense of the word qualified, can often be shown only by the use of marks, or their omission; and therefore the reader who does not understand such use and omission of marks must sometimes fail to obtain the exact meaning of what he is reading. And equally true is it, that a writer may, in like manner, either be obscure or say what he does not intend to say.

Perhaps it is well to say at the outset, and thus forestall a possible objection to some of the points raised herein, that every effort to establish a distinction between "which" and "that," in order to indicate thereby explanatory and restrictive clauses, has been a failure, because good writers of all times have persistently ignored such distinction; and these words are now generally used interchangeably, euphony alone determining the choice between them.

37. In order to obtain the land, he must pay his father's debts, which are secured by judgments.

38. In order to obtain the land, he must pay his father's debts which are secured by judgments.

39. The committee is composed of women, who are not voters.

40. The committee is composed of men who are not voters.

In 37 all of the father's debts are referred to; but in 38 the reference is to only such debts as are secured, which may be all or only part of the debts.

In 39 the assertion is made that all women are not voters; but a like clause in 40 asserts that only the men on the committee are not voters.

The groups of words used to qualify "debts," "women," and "men," are adjectives; those in 37 and 39 are called explanatory adjectives, and those in 38 and 40 restrictive ad-

jectives. But why use a comma before an explanatory, and none before a restrictive, adjective? The reasons for such use are exemplified in Sentence 10. In 37 and 39 the sense is complete when the comma is reached; and what is added is added for explanation. As in 10, the added matter is essentially an appositive; but in 38 and 40 the sense is not complete without the adjectives, which demonstrate, or point out, what debts and what men are meant, as if the language said "those debts" and "those men." "Boys, who are venturesome, often get hurt," is equivalent to "Boys, venturesome persons, often get hurt"; and the commas are as essential in one sentence as in the other.

There lie before me two books: one has a single index, which is in the front of the book; the other has two indexes, one on page 111, and one on page 253. The following sentences are so punctuated as to notify the reader that one book has a single index, and the other more than one index:—

41. You will find the word in the index, at the front of the book.

42. You will find the word in the index on page 111.

In 41 the adjective tells where the index is; and so does the adjective in 42. The absence of the comma in 42 tells which index, and "which" index implies the existence of another index.

With the comma omitted in 41, the existence of another index would be implied. With the comma, the sense is completed at "index"; but without it, the reader does not know where to find the word until the location of the index is given. "Senator Barnes, of New York" identifies the man spoken of from the nature of the language; but in thus referring to him, no other Mr. Barnes is thought of, "of New York" being added simply to tell the reader where he lives. "Senator Barnes of New York" implies the existence of another Senator Barnes, whom the reader may mistake for the one referred to; and therefore the adjective "of New York" is made restrictive by the omission of the comma.

42-1. The ministers abolished taxes which would now yield 150 millions a year, among them being the grist tax, which would alone now give an income of vast proportions.

A comma before the first "which" in this sentence would make the writer say that all taxes were abolished; and the omission of one before the second "which" would make him say that a particular grist tax was among them,—one "which would alone now give," etc.

In the next sentence, from a text-book on grammar, the information is conveyed that all descriptive adjectives are derived from proper names.

43. Descriptive adjectives, derived from proper names, are called Proper Adjectives; as, Spanish, English.

The omission of the first comma would make the adjective element define the kind of descriptive adjectives referred to, and called "proper adjectives," leaving the other descriptive adjectives to receive other names. This, of course, is what the writer wished to say; and it is also what he does not say.

With the first comma omitted there is no real need of the second; but it might properly be used, as will appear hereafter.

Although the sentences thus far considered have been very simple, it is no doubt obvious that one cannot punctuate language unless he understands it; and it is also true that he cannot read intelligently if he does not understand those subtle meanings of language upon which the use of marks is often based.

44. At this time my entire force mustered less than 50,000 men, of all arms.

45. He has gone to California, where his brother lives.

The added thoughts in these two sentences are merely explanatory; and changing them into relative clauses will not make clearer the reason for the use of the comma, although such treatment may sometimes make clearer the real relation of the group of words to the word that they qualify.

As shown in 10, an explanatory term is a co-ordinate term: it repeats the idea in different language—gives another view. Note this in 45, above. Note it in the sentence preceding this one, in which "above" may be expanded into "which is above"; or the entire sentence may read, "Note it in the above." In any case, "above" repeats "45," just as the words in the latter part of Sentence 45 repeat or restate what is meant by "California," in the first part. On the other hand, the restrictive element defines by telling what kind, what one, or the like.

These points will be seen more plainly in the four following sentences:—

45-1. He has gone to the city, in which his brother lives.
45-2. He has gone to the city in which his brother lives.

The meaning in 45-1 is, that he has gone from the country into the city, and that his brother lives in the city. In 45-2 the assertion is, that he has gone to a particular city, which city is identified by the circumstance of his brother's living in it.

46. He preached his first sermon, in Brooklyn, July 20, 1895.
46-1. He preached his first sermon in Brooklyn, July 20, 1895.

In 46 "in Brooklyn" apparently loses its character as an adjective; and yet it is descriptive of the sermon, for it explains that it was a Brooklyn sermon, just as July 20 explains that it was, say, a midsummer sermon. Ordinarily, these terms would be treated as adverbs, expressive of place and time. In 46 the sermon was his very first one; but in 46-1 the sermon was merely his first Brooklyn sermon, "in Brooklyn" telling what "first sermon."

Although the restrictive and explanatory elements herein considered are called adjectives, it is not to be inferred that only adjective elements are so used, for the punctuation is just as essential to express the meaning of adverbs, which, however, are generally restrictive.

Mr. Wilson, in his Treatise on Punctuation, and those who follow his authority, confine their rules under this head to relative clauses, with incidental mention of some other kinds of clauses. An element introduced by a relative pronoun is, of course, an adjective; and therefore the general term adjective is used in this work.

As many restrictive elements are also intermediate elements, the punctuator must decide whether to punctuate them as intermediate or restrictive. The sense at once determines this, because the meaning of a word followed by a restrictive element is not complete without that element, and therefore the reasons assigned for the use of commas to set off an intermediate term do not apply here, and the commas cannot be used. This punctuation is illustrated on almost every page one writes, there being in this paragraph two such restrictive and intermediate elements, beginning with "followed" and "assigned," which do not admit of commas, because they are restrictive.

EXAMPLES.

Point out which commas are used in these examples agreeably to the reasons discussed in the preceding pages.

Why is he not talking, as usual?

We, by art, unteach what Nature taught.

A gift of Peter Brown, deceased, to the city.

In many ways, he confesses, his prayers have been answered.

One afternoon she whisked into the room where the judge sat, reading.

Please accept my thanks for the excellent interview, which I publish to-day.

He knows just how much, and, what is more to the point, just how little, to say.

Four distinct claims were made to that territory a part of which is now called Ohio.

The cabinet is a part of the executive machinery not even mentioned in the constitution.

It was President Jefferson, and not Congress or his party, that made the Louisiana purchase.

A strong idea of religion has generally prevailed, even among the most uncultivated savages.

It takes men a weary while to learn the wickedness of anything that puts gold in their purses.

I leave to-day on the train for home, where I hope to be, thankful for a safe journey, on Monday.

Both are private individuals, with influence, acquired in various ways, over their party in the state.

Books, of one sort or another, are now, on every hand, a common resort of entertainment and pleasure.

Other qualities involved in composition are reserved for the next chapter, on Special Objects in Style.

Your praise was welcome, not only because I believe it was sincere, but because praise has been very scarce.

The dead jurist had no personal interest to promote outside his court or, by collusion or understanding, within it.

The ancient Greeks, who were intellectual, and the ancient Romans, who were warlike, agree upon this point.

Cultivation is a fitting object to be attained by education, particularly in a country like ours, of busy, practical people.

As long as the act appeared to be beneficial, or, at any rate, innocuous, the party admitted, or rather claimed, the responsibility of its passage.

The armistice will expire one week from to-day, and, unless in the interim terms of peace shall be agreed upon, the armies will then resume operations.

In No. 3 there was an article on Miss Edgeworth's "Tales of a Fashionable Life," by John Wilson Croker, who was a constant contributor to the Quarterly.

Analogy, although it is not infallible, is yet that telescope of the mind by which it is marvelously assisted in the discovery of both physical and moral truth.

The advance of Rome was a growth, not only of the Roman power, but of Rome herself; step by step the world was, hardly in a figure, merged, not in the Roman dominion, but in the Roman city.

From that hour Murray became my publisher, conducting himself, in all his dealings, with that fair, open, and liberal spirit which had obtained for him the well merited appellation of the Prince of Booksellers.

It remained a crusading scheme, but, no longer patterned after that of Godfrey and Tancred, it imitated the mad folly which had once extinguished in southern Gaul the most promising civilization of the age.

The civil-service laws, which remove the public service from the control of favoritism, patronage, and politics, should be honestly and thoroughly enforced, and the classified service extended wherever it is possible.

The sense of antagonism instead of rest, of distrust and alienation instead of approval and sympathy, which such times bring, is a test which tries the very heart and reins, and it is one which meets us at all ages, and in all conditions of life.

Lincoln was not a born king of men, ruling by the resistless might of his natural superiority, but a child of the people, who made himself a great persuader, therefore a leader, by dint of firm resolve, and patient effort, and dogged perseverance.

Originally settled by New England people, who believed that intelligence and morality are foundation-stones that must always be placed under any civic structure which is expected to endure, Cleveland early looked to the matter of public schools.

There is a gentle but perfectly irresistible coercion in the habit of reading, well directed, over the whole tenor of a man's character and conduct, which is not the less effectual because it works insensibly, and because it is really the last thing he dreams of.

Edinburgh is a city in the world of every day reality, connected by railway and telegraph-wire with all the capitals of Europe, and inhabited by citizens of the familiar type, who keep ledgers, and attend church, and have sold their immortal portion to the daily paper.

Marcus Aurelius is perhaps the most beautiful figure in history. He is one of those consoling and hope-inspiring marks, which stand forever to remind our weak and easily discouraged race how high human goodness and perseverance have once been carried, and may be carried again.

SECTION VII.—APPOSITIVES, VOCATIVES, ADVERBIAL EXPRESSIONS, DOUBLE OBJECTS.

The relation which the grammarians call "apposition" is a very important one in the expression of thought; and yet it has been almost wholly neglected in text-books, except in its simplest form, i. e., between single words or between short groups of words, although it extends to groups of words often printed as distinct sentences. A full comprehension of this relation is, as will appear in another chapter, often indispensable to a clear understanding of language. Notwithstanding the fact that it is possible, in most instances, to determine by study just what an author means by his language, even if improperly punctuated or not punctuated at all, yet the relation of apposition is one often especially required to be distinguished by marks.

The meaning of apposition is "added to" or "placed by." The word or words so added are not essential to the meaning of the language: they are merely explanatory, and may be omitted without affecting the sense, and may be said, therefore, to be parenthetical.

47. The word, eagle, is derived from the Latin.

47-1. The word eagle is derived from the Latin.

In each of these sentences the relation between "word" and "eagle" is said to be that of apposition; but it is obvious that the subject of the sentence is "word" in 47, and "eagle" in 47-1, thus being the first of the two words in one case, and the second in the other.

In 47 both "word" and "eagle" maintain the characteristics of a noun. In 47-1 "word" performs the office, and occupies the place, of an adjective, describing a combination of letters, and giving a name (word) thereto.

If the added word is merely incidental to the sense, it partakes of the nature of a parenthesis, as illustrated in the sentence preceding this. Such was the early mode of punctuating all appositives; but now the marks of parenthesis give way to commas when the appositive has less of the parenthetical nature. While no line can be drawn between

these two classes of expressions, the meaning of the language generally marks the distinction, which the student will learn most readily from examples.

When the relation of the words becomes even more close, as in 47-1, the commas are omitted.

47-2. The poet, Smith, addressed the meeting.

47-3. The poet Smith addressed the meeting.

While these two sentences are exactly similar to 47 and 47-1, it is well to consider the difference in meaning between 47-2 and 47-3. In 47-2 the central thought is, that the poet, not the historian or the chronicler, spoke, the word "Smith" being used to explain who the poet was. In 47-3 the central thought is that Mr. Smith spoke; and Mr. Smith is identified by the word "poet," which becomes as much a part of the language used to describe the speaker as is the word "John" in the expression "John Smith."

The relation of apposition will always be clear if it be noted that it exists between words or terms of which one expresses the principal thought, or, it may be said, the complete thought.

In "Henry Brown," "Milton the poet," "John the Baptist," "I myself," and many similar expressions, the idea of apposition has been lost, the separate words in each having become merged into a single term as a proper designation of the person spoken of, or, as in the case of "I myself," as an emphatic expression.

Although it is said that the idea of apposition does not appear between the parts of a proper name, if the order of the words be reversed, as when they appear in catalogues, the apposition becomes apparent, and the comma is used. Thus:—

47-4. Brown, Smith.

The person designated in this name is Smith Brown, the comma putting "Smith" in apposition with "Brown"; and the [illegible] be true if the name were John Brown. The

comma serves here, as usual, to distinguish a real from an apparent relation.

VOCATIVES.

Words used in addressing a person or thing frequently appear to be in a relation that is not their true relation.

48. Come, George.

49. Ring out, wild bells.

Each of the above constitutes a complete sentence; and as every sentence must have a subject and a verb, "George" and "bells" appear to be the subjects, which, as neither is the subject, sets up an apparent relation to be distinguished from a real relation. This is done by the commas.

The grammarians call "George" and "bells" vocatives.

While the reason given for the punctuation is sufficient, we should not go far astray if we said "George" and "bells" are in apposition with the subjects understood; but such relation cannot exist in the following, where the purely vocative use of words is shown:—

50. I remain, Sir, your obedient servant.

51. I come, fellow citizens, to advise patience.

52. Mark Antony, here, take you Caesar's body.

ABSOLUTE TERMS.

Groups of words are often so used as to have only remote structural relation to the other parts of the sentences; and this may be with a part near which they do not stand, if, indeed, such part can be identified. The object of such terms is explanatory; and the grammarians call them absolute phrases. Such phrases are set off by commas because of the obvious disconnection between them and what follows:--

53. To speak plainly, I think you did wrong.

54. Our object having been accomplished, we returned home.

DOUBLE OBJECTS.

Lest misapprehension follow what has been said in regard to the absence of structural relation between words standing together, some reference should be made to double objects, which might seem to fall under this class.

55. They elected Mr. Smith president.

The two words, "Smith" and "president," sustain the same relation to the verb; and as no other than their true relation appears, no punctuation is needed. Punctuation deals only with relations liable to misconstruction, even though this misconstruction be but momentary.

SECTION VIII.—ADVERBS AND CONJUNCTIONS.

Apart from the consideration already given conjunctions, neither conjunctions nor adverbs, performing their distinctive functions and placed in their natural order, require much attention from the punctuator; but when otherwise used, and when so placed that an apparent relation which is not a real relation is set up, careful attention must be given to them, in order to ascertain, and to indicate by proper marks, the true function of each, and the true relation it sustains to other words in the sentence.

The natural position of a conjunction is between the words or group of words connected by it, and the natural position of an adverb is before the word or words it qualifies; but both conjunctions and adverbs are frequently put elsewhere in the sentence, and, in whatever position used, one word sometimes performs the office of both conjunction and adverb.

"However" is a good illustration of this class of words, and a consideration of its uses and punctuations will serve to illustrate what punctuation is demanded with it.

56. Mr. Balfour, who is said to have a pretty taste in poetry, was asked when the next Laureate would be appointed. He replied, however, with a lamentable appearance

of hurrying away from an unpleasant subject, that this was a matter wholly within the hands of the Prime Minister.

57. He was reluctant to discuss the subject. He replied, however, to all questions put to him, however pointed they were.

In both 56 and 57 "however" occupies its usual position when connecting the sentence in which it stands with a preceding sentence; but the meaning of the language of 56 clearly shows that there is no such connection between the two sentences as the meaning and use of "however" imply, such connection, for instance, as is shown by the first "however" in 57. Therefore the punctuation of each cannot be correct. The function and the meaning of "however" in 56 may be shown by a transposition and a substitution. Thus: "He replied, but (however, yet, still, notwithstanding) with a lamentable appearance of hurrying away from an unpleasant subject, that this was a matter," etc. "But," or any one of the words following it within the marks of parenthesis, does not here connect the sentence in which it stands to a preceding sentence; but it does connect the clause, "he replied" being understood, in which it stands to the preceding clause, i. e., the clause of which the words preceding "but" form a part. As "however" in 57 does not belong to what follows or precedes it, the commas are indispensable to show this fact.

"However" occupies its natural position in 56, and in such position cannot take a comma after it; but its usual position when connecting two sentences or clauses is shown in 57. The writer of 56 probably intended, as is shown by the punctuation, to put the word in its usual position, but failed to do so in the haste of writing, the sentence occurring in a newspaper editorial. As usually written the sentence would read thus:—

56-a. He replied, with, however, a lamentable appearance of hurrying away from an unpleasant subject, that this was a matter, etc.

The second "however" in 57 is an adverb in its natural

position, and no more requires a mark than does "very" in the expression "very good."

58. You ask me, perhaps, even you who are all charity, why parts of this book are what they are.

59. You ask me, perhaps even you who are all charity, why parts of this book are what they are.

In 58 "perhaps" is an adverb used to modify the entire sentence; but as it stands in a position where it is liable to misconstruction, as is shown by its use in 59, it requires the commas before and after it.

In 59 "perhaps" belongs to the two words following it, and not, as might appear, to what precedes it; and therefore a comma is used before it to cut it off from what precedes, while the absence of one after it shows that it belongs to what follows.

These uses of the marks give to each sentence a distinct meaning, different from that of the other sentence.

60. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you.

61. Blessed are ye when men shall reproach you.

The above are the old and new versions of Matt. v. 11. In 60 "when" is a conjunction purely, introducing a conditional clause, and is equivalent to "if," although the idea of time cannot wholly be separated from it in this use. In 61 "when" is a conjunction and an adverb, and as an adverb it conveys the idea of time more distinctly than in 60. This difference in use is, of course, the view given by the translators. In 60 the comma marks a distinct separation of ideas, the latter being subordinate to the former, and, in a measure, explanatory of "ye" by indicating a condition of "ye" that brings blessing.

In 61 essentially the same clause completes the idea of what precedes by restricting it to a certain time, as if it said to-day or during reproach; and, besides, it is in its natural order, and there is, therefore, no need of the comma.

62. Few, probably, ever accomplished as much as they expected.

The adverb is here used to modify the entire assertion; and it is so placed, out of its natural order, because if placed anywhere else it would appear to modify a single word, as it would do even in this position with the commas omitted.

63. Some men are indeed foolish, though, indeed, they apparently possess much wisdom.

The first "indeed" qualifies the word before which it stands, just as "very" would qualify it, if in the same position; but the second "indeed," like "probably" in 62, refers to the entire clause in which it stands, and it also has an interjectional force, which is alone sufficient reason for the punctuation, as an interjection is a parenthetical word having no connection with what follows or precedes it. The reason, then, for the punctuation is, that the comma indicates the disjunction between the words.

Another verse from the old and new versions of the New Testament (John i. 47) will illustrate the points under consideration, even to a use of "indeed."

64. Jesus saw Nathaniel coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!

65. Jesus saw Nathaniel coming to him, and saith of him, Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!

Though called an adverb by the dictionaries, "indeed" is here used as an adjective, with the force of "in reality." It might very properly be written in its old style, "in deed," which form explains its position after the noun.

"Behold" in 64 (old version) is a verb, and takes "Israelite" for an object; but in 65 it is purely an interjection, and, although in the verb form, it may be omitted without the least effect upon the sense.

When two adverbs with no relation to each other stand together in a sentence, the sense will determine the punctuation.

66. He came here yesterday.

67. He did his work, under the most adverse circumstances, willingly, cheerfully.

In (a) "yesterday" sustains the same relation to what precedes it, as "here" sustains to what precedes it. Such a relation does not exist in 67; nor are the adverbs co-ordinate, because "willingly and cheerfully" would not quite express the shade of meaning conveyed by the words as they stand in the sentence. "Cheerfully" is a stronger word than "willingly," and is used, just as a word in apposition is used, to repeat the idea in another form, and with an additional view, but not such a co-ordinate or subordinate view as would require or admit a conjunction. Perhaps the best reason for the use of the comma between them is, that the words sustain to each other, by their position, an apparent relation which is not their real relation.

"Under the most adverse circumstances" is an adverb qualifying the remainder of the sentence, and it is out of its natural order, which is at the end of the sentence. To say, without explanation, that "he did his work willingly, cheerfully," would imply a reason, perhaps centered in himself, for not expecting him to do so. The same meaning would be temporarily held by the reader, with the words in their natural order; and therefore, as Mr. Bain says, when a writer does not wish the main clause to be conceived unconditionally, he puts the subordinate clause first, because it contains a qualifying or subordinate idea, and so prevents misconception of the principal one, and saves the mental effort needed to correct such misconception. Any word or group of words may be transposed for the same purpose.

This example, illustrating the necessity for the transposed form, will serve to show the reader how rapidly the mind works, and therefore how important is the punctuation of a sentence, in order to prevent wrong combinations.

In the short sentence under consideration, if the transposition were not made, perhaps the misconstruction suggested above would not often occur; but the sentence would always be flat, and would not convey the full thought because of its lack of style, which, DeQuincey says, makes the thought.

The misconception above spoken of has its uses, as is

illustrated in the next sentence, wherein a general statement is made and then qualified, the purpose being to render the qualification less definite than if it preceded the main statement.

68. Great Britain is a naval power, chiefly.

If "chiefly" were placed in its natural order, i. e., after "is," it would have a restrictive meaning; and the extent of "naval power" would depend upon the meaning attached to "chiefly," which may indicate just a little more than one-half, or a little less than all. In its present position, coming after the unqualified assertion that "Great Britain is a naval power," it is explanatory of such assertion, and is in contrast with the idea of "wholly," expressed in the unqualified assertion. As an explanatory word it partakes of the nature of an appositive of the idea expressed in the general statement. It has also, as such words have, a parenthetical nature, and might, without great violation of rule or reason, be placed within marks of parenthesis, as being explanatory of a statement needing qualification.

69. It is a question that must be decided, largely, by individual judgment and conscience.

70. She answered, cheerily, " 'Deed I can, sir, an' sit down. We're havin' supper."

An analysis of the thought in these two sentences will show that the position of each adverb is the only one that will bring out the full force of the sentence. "Largely" does not qualify what precedes or what follows, but the entire sentence; and the punctuation must thus cut it off from each part of the sentence.

"Cheerily" might be expressed by a relative clause following the sentence; as, "which was a cheerful answer," while if its meaning were confined to the verb, it would refer only to the manner of speaking, instead of anticipating and characterizing what is to follow, as it does here.

The modes of punctuating "therefore" are so various that many publishers fix its punctuation by rule,—some al-

ways setting it off by commas, and some never using a mark with it. The rule of a large English printing house says that "therefore, doubtless, indeed, however, etc." should not be separated from the rest of the sentence by commas. Such punctuation would permit "however" in 56 and 57, and "perhaps" in 58 and 59, to point one way in one sentence, and another way in the other, leaving the reader to study out the meaning, if not to guess at it.

It is no doubt true that in many sentences consistency in punctuation will require marks not at all essential to the meaning; but if a writer is punctuating according to reason, he will often sacrifice marks, even at the risk of seeming inconsistent.

All such words as the above require no mark when in their natural order; but they do require marks when they come between words with a closer connection to each other than that between the adverb or the conjunction and either of such words, because in such case the adverb or the conjunction is an intermediate term.

71. Line for line and point for point, your dominion is as great as theirs, though without fine names. Build, therefore, your own world.

With "therefore" before "build," there would be no need of marks; and their omission as the sentence stands would not be open to criticism. Their use renders the sentence more rhetorical if they be observed in reading; and this gives emphasis to the adverb, which is a good reason for the use of the marks.

In a sentence in the New Testament, almost identical with 71, no marks are used with the adverb.

72. Render therefore to all their dues.

It is better to omit the commas if the intermediate word coalesces with the remainder of the sentence, and so makes a smoothly reading sentence.

The general principle underlying the punctuation of adverbs, is well exemplified in the correct punctuation of "also."

a much abused word, whose meaning is so plain, its proper use and punctuation need not often be in doubt. Unless it modifies what follows, thus making such word or words express a thought additional to that expressed by some preceding word or words, the fact must be shown by the use of one or two commas. If it comes at the end of a sentence, it can belong only to what precedes it, and no mark will be required to show the fact.

72-1. Henry borrowed my gun, and also ruined it.

72-2. Several times in a year I dream by night of some realm gorgeous with gayly tinted beetles and lustrous butterflies. Wild flowers, also, have been a lasting delight.

72-3. Dr. Holmes describes himself as wandering along our native stream "with reeking sandal and superfluous gun." My sandals suffered, also, but I went with butterfly net and tin botanical box.

72-4. And this commandment we have from him, that he who loveth God love his brother also.

In 72-1 "also" makes "ruined" express a thought in addition to that expressed by "borrowed"; in 72-2 it makes "wild flowers" express the additional thought; and in 72-3 it makes all that precedes express such a thought. As it occupies its natural position in 72-1, no mark is admissible before or after it. Without the commas in 72-2, "also" would refer to what follows, and make such words express a thought additional to some other thought expressed by "wild flowers."

The abuse of "also" is seen in either so placing or punctuating it as to change the real meaning of the language, as, for instance, placing it before "suffered," in 72-3, without commas. It may be put before a word repeated, but the added thought will be expressed by the word with its modifiers; as,—

72-5. He suffered much, and he also suffered long.

The meaning of the added thought in 72-5 would be exactly expressed by "and also long," but the repetition of the verb gives emphasis to such thought.

72-6. He has now lived to see his resolute and almost solitary stand referred to with cheers in the meetings of his political opponents, and endorsed by an overwhelming vote of the people.

In a very lavishness of good fortune, the distinction was also given President Cleveland of having made and triumphed on the other great issue of the campaign.

"Also" has no meaning in this sentence, for nothing that precedes the sentence suggests its use. So placed, it can have one of two meanings only: for example, "The distinction was due, and was also given, the president"; "The distinction given the secretary, was also given the president." The obvious meaning of the sentence is, "The distinction, also, was given the president."

The distinctions made by the use of marks in some of the above sentences are very fine; but they are logical, and cannot well be ignored, nor can such use of marks be called arbitrary. Generally, a slight change in the wording of a sentence will obviate the need of marks; but it is not always possible to show by a word's position just what it modifies, and in such case the marks are indispensable. For example, the adverb "generally," in the sentence preceding this, modifies a statement about to be made, and has the force of the term "generally speaking," or "in general," which is often used to introduce such a sentence as the above.

Many writers ignore such relations as are indicated by this mode of punctuation; but, as a rule, such writers do not give to their language the force and beauty obtained by a transposed position of words which requires nice punctuation. On the other hand, some adverbs, while not modifying what follows them, so readily coalesce with it as to seem to modify it, and thus not to require the marks; as, for instance, "He was formerly a wealthy citizen." In reading this sentence, one does not emphasize the idea expressed by "formerly," as might be done by a pause before and after it; but he reads it as if the word were a modifier of what follows it. In other words, this word so readily coalesces with

the context as to require no mark to show a separation between it and the remainder of the sentence. The illustrative examples will serve to show the application of the principles laid down. (See page 66.)

SECTION IX.—DEPENDENT AND TRANSPOSED EXPRESSIONS.

As the principle of disjunction readily determines their punctuation, it seems unnecessary to dwell upon even illustrative examples of the numerous sentences that fall under the head of this Section; and yet it may be well to consider, though briefly, all classes of sentences, if for no other purpose, in order to prevent the too frequent use of marks.

A transposed group of words does not necessarily need a mark; but it is essential when the transposed words do not stand out distinctly by themselves, or when the last word of the transposed group would make sense if connected with the first word of the following group.

73. Though the explanation of the mystery did not for sometime occur to me, I may as well conclude the matter here.

The transposed group of words is here so long that it is well to give notice to the reader when it ends, in order to save the effort otherwise necessary to determine the fact. Although it may seem unnecessary, especially in a sentence like this, thus to mark off groups of words whose sense would determine the separation, the punctuation renders the reading much easier.

74. To the wise and good, old age presents a scene of tranquil enjoyment.

75. A science is a body of principles. While principles may abide, the phenomena in which they appear may change.

In the absence of a comma in 74, "good" would be read as if modifying "old age"; and its absence from 75 would leave the reader momentarily in doubt as to where the first group ends, because "abide" may take an object, and there-

fore the reader must ascertain in some way where the group ends. What follows "abide" shows, clearly enough, the relation of the two groups of words; but the second group must be partially read before this appears, and therefore it is better to use the comma.

76. We fail to praise the ceaseless ministry of the great inanimate world around us only because its kindness is unobtrusive.

77. We never praise the ceaseless ministry of the great inanimate world around us, except when we are compelled to invoke its kindness.

In 76 the sense is hardly complete until the restrictive element beginning with "only" is read, because the language, particularly the word "fail," obviously requires and suggests modification; and because of this fact the parts of the sentence are necessarily so closely related as to read smoothly—to coalesce in a manner that does not admit separation by marks.

In 77 complete sense is made by the words preceding "except"; but they say more than the writer wishes to say, and therefore an explanation is necessary, which, as an explanation, requires the comma.

78. I shall go unless my orders forbid.

What is said of 77 apparently applies to 78; but the modifier in the latter partakes of the nature of a restrictive element, and is so placed as to render the use of the mark unnecessary.

Groups of words introduced by "because," "if," "when," "that," etc., are similarly treated.

When a single word, or two or more words, stand for a larger group of words that would require the comma, some punctuators use it.

79. Plain occasions demand only plain language. Thus, it might be advisable, for learned readers or for the sake of precision in terms, to speak of "the immanence and the transcendence of God."

When the introductory word more clearly modifies the verb, generally as an adverb of manner, the comma is better omitted; and it may be omitted always.

SECTION X.—FIGURES.

In the treatment of Arabic figures is found a striking contrast between punctuation by rule and punctuation by reason; and the following brief exposition of this subject will exemplify the principles already considered in this work.

Rule.—"With the exception of dates, figures consisting of four or more characters are pointed with a comma before every three from the end, or between each class of hundreds."

This is a general rule; but every printing office has a rule of its own, which is always about the first thing inquired for by a new compositor entering the office. A common rule among printers requires the omission of the comma in numbers containing less than five figures; and because of such a rule one often sees sentences like the following:—

80. Mr. Smith bought the place for $9000, and immediately sold it for $10,000.

Punctuation by reason gives the following apparently arbitrary marking; but, as will be seen, it is neither inconsistent nor arbitrary.

81. Mr. Smith, who resides at 2347 Chestnut Avenue, bought 1,347,562 shingles in 1894, for which he paid $1,894.

In order to read this sentence, silently or aloud, one must translate the numbers. The translated sentence will read as follows:—

Mr. Smith, who resides at twenty-three hundred forty-seven Chestnut Avenue, bought one million three hundred forty-seven thousand five hundred sixty-two shingles in eighteen hundred ninety-four, for which he paid one thousand eight hundred ninety-four dollars.

It will be observed that in this translation the street and date numbers are divided in one way, and the other two

numbers are divided in another way. With the exception of date and street numbers, all numbers are read by specifying the periods,—units', thousands', millions', etc.,—each period, when full, consisting of three figures. For this reason the punctuator indicates to the eye how many periods (parts) a number contains, provided such number is to be read by periods. As he knows that date and street numbers (they rarely ever consist of more than four figures) are almost universally read as translated above,—that is, by dividing into two parts,—he does not mark them. He does not make a rule and an exception; but he deals with a fact,—with two facts,—and punctuates accordingly. In this particular case the rule may seem to be as good as the reason; but the latter follows a principle applicable to all cases, while the former serves only the case in hand.

Dates and inscriptions in Roman numerals were formerly punctuated with the period, and the punctuation also differed from the above marking by subdividing the units' period; as M.DCCC.XCIV. Instead of the periods, some printers leave a space between the letters of each period; as, M DCCC XCIV. These two styles of punctuation are still occasionally followed.

EXAMPLES.

Point out which commas in these examples are used agreeably to the reasons discussed in the preceding pages.

And you don't know who I am, yet?
His brother John was a senator from Ohio.
He spoke softly, that no one else might hear.
If I cannot go, why, I shall remain at home.
This course may, besides, be to your advantage.
There were, surely, always pretenders in science.
"I am going to try for a school," she said, quietly.

Literary men, even, have been guilty of this crime.

It is a costly article, which, however, is worth the price.

He who pursues pleasure only, defeats the object of his creation.

They are alike in one respect, that each is susceptible of omission.

Let us go and hear the veteran General Sherman, who is to speak on war.

The proprietors of the News are in business, incidentally at least, for revenue.

Here, her sisters and brothers having married, she lived alone with her father.

To whom he dedicated Venus and Adonis, "the first heir of his invention," as he calls it.

In February, 1616, Shakespeare's younger daughter, Judith, married Thomas Quiney.

The influence of which was to affect, and elevate if possible, the style of the industry.

The expression "It is worth a Jew's eye" is proverbial, and probably dates from the middle ages.

Had his logic been so open to assault, his quick-witted opponent would easily have vanquished him.

Every one, whether lawyer, legislator, or layman, will be the better and wiser for having read the book.

Good riders they were, undoubtedly, accustomed to the saddle almost from infancy, and well mounted.

Flirtation is an amusement so hopelessly vulgar that I know little more of it than that it exists, said he, coldly.

No one knew where the boundary line was, because, as we pointed out long ago, there never was a boundary line.

What is the cause of the universal, or at least the general, unwillingness to let these poor people have the use of a few square yards of land?

He was a great sufferer from physical pain during his whole life, from his boyhood, when a student at Christ's Hospital, down to the day of his death.

Holmes illustrated, perhaps better than any of that remarkable circle of poets of whom he was the surviving member, the brightness and beauty of life in itself.

We might apply to Shakespeare what Don Pedro says of Benedick, "The man doth fear God, howsoever it seems not in him by some large jests he will make."

Three things determine what a man shall be, or rather there are three things through which God determines what a man shall be,—his descent, his surroundings, and himself.

If not constructed on historical principles, and if not the outcome of extensive collaboration, no longer can any dictionary of our language claim to be of the first rank, on grounds that are tenable.

Some birds are always assertive and forward, like the robins and sparrows; others, which are equally familiar with man, are as diffident and reserved, the hedge-sparrows being the most noticeable examples.

As a philosopher Coleridge was the most suggestive of thinkers, and though he left no system, perhaps because he left none, he has profoundiy influenced the direction of all subsequent philosophical thought on its ideal and transcendental side.

His emotions are divided between contemptuous hatred of those who are beneath him because they are black, and envious hatred of those who are above him because they are what he calls "aristocrats"; and we are not alarmed if he rallies the "crackers" of a state, or even of a group of states in which the same conditions exist, to his support.

SECTION XI.—APPARENT EXCEPTIONS TO GENERAL PRINCIPLES.

Although a few of the more subtle uses of the comma will be reserved for discussion in another chapter, it may be well to consider here some sentences whose punctuation either does not seem to fall under the general principles exemplified in the foregoing illustrative examples, or does constitute what may be termed an exception. The punctuation of most of these sentences, instead of constituting a real exception to the principle, will be found to elucidate that principle, if broadly applied.

In 6 a series of words without a final conjunction to bind them together, is set off from the verb by a comma, thus marking the series as a whole and as constituting a single term. This term may be a subject, a predicate, or an object.

Consistency in punctuation would seem to require a comma after "lecture" in the following:—

82. Teach, urge, threaten, lecture him.

An attempt to read it, making a pause after lecture,—that is, to read it "commatically,"—will at once show that the continuity of thought would be broken, because such mode of reading would apparently put "him" in the series, and would make an awkward pause. A comma after "lecture" would produce the same effect on the eye. If a group of words be substituted for the single word "him," a pause would be made in reading the sentence, and the comma should be used to indicate such relation.

82-1. Teach, urge, threaten, lecture, all who violate the law.

In the following sentence both modes of punctuation are exemplified:—

82-2. Ease, indulgence, luxury, sloth, are the sources of misery; making a man a poor, sordid, selfish, wretched being.

The principle exemplified in the punctuation of a series (Section II.) is often violated by mistaking for a series three

or more words standing in this apparent relation, and even more frequently by mistaking the parts of a final compound term for terms of the series.

83. Upon demand I agree to pay one hundred dollars to John Smith, his heirs or assigns.

This sentence defies the punctuator, as do all slovenly constructed sentences. As "his" modifies both "heirs" and "assigns," it must not be cut off from the latter by a comma before "or." The omission of the comma reduces the object of "to" to two terms, which are separated by a comma; but when two or more words are so separated, and stand in the relation of words in a series, the relation is that of co-ordination, with "and" understood. This would make the sentence read as if written, "to John Smith and his heirs or assigns," which is not the meaning.

The conjunction is never omitted between two terms standing in such relation to each other, except in the rhetorical use of language, and then it is always clear from the context that "and" is understood.

This sentence may be written, to avoid error, in either of the following ways:—

83-1. I agree to pay one hundred dollars to John Smith or to his heirs or assigns.

83-2. I agree to pay John Smith or his heirs or assigns one hundred dollars.

If the last term of the series is a group of words, and the series is the subject of a verb, a comma is generally placed before the verb, even though a conjunction unite the final terms of the series.

84. Fraud, enthusiasm, and narrowness of view, often shape the premises to fit the conclusion.

Although Sentence 6 is quite unlike the above, the reasons given for its punctuation apply to 84, because the sense is more readily developed by marking the end of the last *term* and of the subject, thus setting the subject off as a whole.

Almost universal custom likewise requires a comma before certain connecting words used in a formal manner. A judge would write, in an informal manner, the following sentence:—

85. The court holds that the evidence is material.

But the same judge would use, in a formal manner, almost the same words, as follows:—

85-1. Held, that the evidence is material.

And the following in like manner:—

85-2. Resolved, that a petition for his pardon be sent to the governor.

"That," when used in such sentences, has been called a sort of handle to a group of words conceived as a whole. In some printing offices the word "resolved" is printed in italics or small caps, and in others the word "that" is begun with a capital letter, the purpose of each being to show the separation of the group of words beginning with "that."

"Whereas," used in a preamble, is punctuated in the same way.

It is quite impossible to lay down a rule, or to state a general principle, governing the use of the comma before "that" when used in sentences somewhat similar to the above. Indeed, there is a great lack of uniformity in the use of the mark in these sentences; but good usage favors its employment whenever the group of words needs to be considered as a whole, as, for instance, when they constitute a predicate or an appositive. Thus:—

85-5. The truth is, that we very much exaggerate the power of riches.

The mode of punctuation illustrated in 85-5 is by no means universal; but the comma after "this" in 85-6 is very essential to continuity of thought in reading the sentence.

85-6. The benefit of a right good book all depends upon this, that its virtues just soak into the mind, and there become a living, generative force.

If the principles laid down in the preceding sections were rigidly applied to the punctuation of every sentence, the frequency of the use of the comma would detract from its value, since the mark would often fail to convey to the reader its real meaning, without a careful consideration of the reasons for its use in each case.

At the very beginning of the subject, under Sentence 2, there was found an apparent exception to the principle illustrated in the sentences (1 and 2) under consideration. Such apparent exception is found in the absence of the comma before the second "and" in the following:—

86. There are only two islands named in the sentence,—the island of "England and Scotland" and the island of "Ireland."

To preserve the reader's continuity of thought in reading the above sentence, it is necessary that notice be given that the second "and" does not connect a word having the same relation to "Scotland" that "Scotland" has to "England"; and such notice is especially required in this case, for the reader's knowledge of the geographical fact that "Wales" is a part of the island named might lead him to expect the word "Wales" to follow the second "and." In the absence of other warning, a comma would be required here, just as it is essential in 2; but the other warning is found in the repetition of the word "the," each "the" introducing similarly formed and short groups of words. Such notice to the reader renders the use of the comma quite unnecessary, and therefore it is better to throw it overboard.

The presence of the quotation marks further serves to show the reader that two groups of words are to be connected by the second "and," and that the conjunction cannot be followed by a word constituting a part of the preceding term, because such term is marked, as a term, by being quoted, which completes it. All such points as the above, and, of course, all the real purposes of marks of punctuation, will become clear to the one who seeks the real meaning of the

language, and who seeks to convey, readily and unmistakably, the meaning of his own written language.

87. The order leaves only a few hundred places, below those filled by Presidential appointment and Senatorial confirmation and above the grade of laborers and scullions, for the politicians to quarrel over.

In the above, the first "and" connects two nouns, "appointment" and "confirmation," each of which is modified by an adjective, thus forming two similar groups of words whose relation is so obvious that the comma is not needed to disconnect any apparently related words. The second "and" connects two adjectives, which are similarly formed, and each is introduced by a preposition, which serves to show the proper relations of the groups of words, as did the two "the's" in 86; and therefore the comma finds its substitute in the prepositions, though different words, introducing like terms similarly formed. Moreover, it is desirable to avoid the use of a comma in the intermediate term between "places" and its modifier (for the politicians to quarrel over), thus conforming to the principle exemplified in the consideration of 24. But the intermediate term is clearly restrictive, and therefore the use of the first comma breaks an intimate relation so abruptly as to produce lack of smoothness in the sentence. Although the term is restrictive, it is essential to set it off by commas, in order to connect the parts of a disrupted sentence. The sentence would read much better if written thus:—

87-1. The order leaves, for the politicians to quarrel over, only a few hundred places below those, etc.

In like manner the comma may be omitted between two terms joined by correlatives, unless the length of such terms or the relation of the words ending the first, and beginning the second, term, is such as to require a mark, in order more readily to indicate the end of the first term. The principal correlative words are "both—and," "either—or," "such—as,"

"more—than," "though—yet," "the more—the better," and their variations.

It would be difficult to give more specific directions than the above; and they are not required if the reader will bear in mind that our general principle applies to all sentences of this construction. It may, however, interest the student to see the result of two attempts at following specific rules for the punctuation of terms connected by correlatives.

Mr. Wilson would punctuate phrases, but not clauses, connected by "both—and," "whether—or," "either—or," "neither—nor"; and he illustrates, in the following sentences, this mode of punctuation:—

87-2. We cannot trace either their causes or their effects.

87-3. Neither flatter yourselves, nor permit others to flatter you.

"Neither," in 87-3, coming before a verb, raises the expectation of another verb, and gives notice of its coming, just as much as "either" performs a similar service in 87-2; and I fail to see any reason at all in such punctuation.

In 22-1 is illustrated a mode of punctuation to which many writers make a single exception. But before giving the exception, let us glance at Mr. Wilson's treatment of the subject. He says the comma should be omitted "if a finite verb, active or neuter, immediately precedes the negative." Under this rule no comma would be used before "not" in 22-1, because its verb is passive; and Mr. Wilson would uphold the punctuation of the following sentences, using the comma in 88 because a word intervenes between the verb and "not":—

88. He came here, not to teach, but to be taught.

88-1. He came not to teach, but to be taught.

The rule seems so dogmatical, it is worthy of notice that few writers follow it.

The exception referred to is seen in the omission of the comma before "not" immediately following some form of the verb "to be."

88-2. Hawthorne was not only shy, but very reserved.

This apparent exception serves to emphasize the value of punctuation by reason, because a careful comparison between the above and 22-1, which sentences appear to be identical in construction, will show that the reason for the use of the comma after "attained," in 22-1, cannot be applied in 82-2. In the latter the negative is in its usual position, and the contrast or emphasis is obtained by the introduction of the word "only"; in 22-1 the negative is out of its usual position, and at once suggests its relation to what follows, thus cutting it off from what precedes. The usual form is, "The man was not shy"; but it would be quite unusual to say "His success was attained not by ability." In reading 22-1 the reader naturally suspends the meaning at the point marked by the comma, expecting it to be completed by words following what intervenes, just as he would do in 17 with proper notice, but not without it. In 22-1 the comma throws the negation forward, while in 82-2 it leaves it with the entire clause in which "not" stands.

If the language of a sentence whose verb is a form of "to be" is such as to show that the intermediate term is introduced especially for emphasis, the comma would serve, perhaps, to reveal the fact, and the reading of the sentence according to such marking might best develop the emphasis intended. Thus:—

88-3. The book's primary aim is, not to convince the skeptic, but to solve the difficulties that beset thinking men.

While such punctuation as that shown in 88-3 is not at all essential, it is not inconsistent with that of 88-2.

EXAMPLES.

Point out which commas are used in the following examples agreeably to the reasons discussed in the preceding pages.

The laws of the sentence all grow out of this simple adjustment, of part to part, and of each part to the whole.

Men are often, and properly, put under obligation to do that for which they have, in themselves, no present ability.

Still, of stormy days, and at times when my rheumatism is more than usually troublesome, I am apt to find myself complaining.

Anything that he did was right, regardless of its morality, or lack of it, and everything he said was true to him, however false it might be.

Burke said that such "little arts and devices" were not to be wholly condemned, on the ground that "they diffuse occasional gayety over the severe brow of moral freedom."

I cannot express my sense of the great loss, not only to the world of letters but to the world of loving friends who held him dear, we have sustained in the death of Dr. Holmes.

The author has shown consummate art in introducing one improbability, that of the caskets, to balance, and, as it were, excuse, the other improbability, that of the pound of flesh.

These gods and goddesses could not have desired a more dignified, richly expressive, high-sounding language in which to converse, quarrel, sing, make love, or fulminate, than the pure Cimric affords.

Amusement is the waking sleep of labor. When it absorbs thought, patience, and strength that might have been seriously employed, it loses its distinctive character, and becomes the task-master of idleness.

This has been, in the main, the estimate of Coleridge's career, that his life began with the rarest promise, and ended in failure, as if he were deserving our resentment for having done so little when he might have done so much.

By the diversity of employments which have necessarily arisen in our modern life, we perceive, or at least are beginning to discern, that in our fellow-men there is another universe, as rich in resources as the physical world.

In what, then, does courage, in this ordinary sense of the word, consist? First, in persistency, or the determination to have one's own way, coupled with contempt for safety and ease, and readiness to risk pain or death in getting one's way.

No wonder that they creep forth from the foul mystery of their interiors, stumble down from their garrets, or scramble up out of their cellars, on the upper step of which you may

see the grimy house-wife, before the shower is ended, letting the raindrops gutter down her visage.

Creation is so vital and fluent, reflex and flowing, in its movements, that any statement of it not paradoxical involves us in flat contradictions, and we take refuge in such expressions as, he who loses his life shall find it, death is swallowed up in life, to him who has shall be given, and so on.

A thunderbolt at last descended upon the heads of the Tories in the shape of an exhaustive and masterly arraignment of their attitude, which delighted the Revolutionists; and when it was discovered that the anonymous author was the youthful Hamilton, the stir was sufficient to have turned a less steady head.

The study of classical literature is probably on the decline; but, whatever may be the fate of this study in general, it is certain that, as instruction spreads and the number of readers increases, attention will be more and more directed to the poetry of Homer, not indeed as a part of a classical course, but as the most important poetical monument existing.

Harvard and Yale, Princeton and Columbia, Cornell and Johns Hopkins, and all their sister institutions should say, "Ours be the task to engage in the pursuit of science by our observers and thinkers, by our researchers and philosophers; for we are sure that the liberation of mankind from error and ignorance will establish the reign of health, comfort, peace, happiness, and virtue."

From the handbreath of territory called the province of Holland rises a power which wages eighty years' warfare with the most potent empire on earth, and which, during the progress of the struggle, becoming itself a mighty state, and binding about its own slender form a zone of the richest possessions of earth, from pole to tropic, finally dictates its decrees to the Empire of Charles.

O Fortune! thou that giveth unto each his portion on this dirty planet, bestow, if it shall please thee, coronets and crowns, and principalities and purses, and pudding and power, upon the great and noble and fat ones of the earth; grant me that, with a heart of independence, unyielding to thy favors and unbending to thy power, I may attain to literary fame,—and, though starvation be my lot, I will smile that I have not been born a King.

In this, my second and last letter of preface, I shall settle the idea and the arrangement of my papers. There will be in all about seven, of which four will exhibit the material on which the student is to work; the other three, the tools with which the workmanship is to be conducted. First, what is to be done, and, secondly, how is the natural and obvious distribution of the work; that is to say, the business is to assign, first, the end, and, secondly, the means.

ERRONEOUS EXAMPLES.

Point out which commas are used in the following examples contrary to the reasons discussed in the preceding pages.

The bill passed the Assembly and Senate and became a law to-day.

The masters agree to renew and readjust the wages paid twice a year.

Stamps, or local checks, should not be sent in payment for subscriptions.

The warning of the ship's danger came from a whistling buoy or, as it is technically called, a siren.

There were, of course, many things that troubled me, and equally of course one of these things was whispering.

God puts property into the hands of individual men to be defended, increased, and used, under responsibility to him.

They hoped that he might claim a divine right, or at least commission, and thus lay himself open to legal proceedings.

Attended for a moment by her royal mother and the ladies of her court, who bow and then retire, Victoria ascends her throne, a girl, alone, and for the first time, amid an assemblage of men.

If it be an objection that a man speaks in the pulpit, as men speak anywhere else, on subjects that deeply interest them, the true man will soon find that he can speak more to the purpose in some other place.

> There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
> There is rapture on the lonely shore,
> There is society where none intrudes,
> By the deep Sea, and music in its roar.

The profession being already furnished with the excellent treatises of Mr. Starkie and Mr. Phillips on Evidence, with large bodies of notes, referring to American decisions, perhaps some apology may be deemed necessary for obtruding on their notice another work, on the same subject.

Education felt the inspiration of its true mission when it gathered the little knot of students behind the historic haystack in Williamstown, where it planned to carry the gospel of Christianity across continent and ocean back to the Old World, there to accomplish its great and glorious purpose.

In the absence of any definite knowledge, as to the composition of the atmospheres by which the planets are surrounded, or as to the climates which they enjoy, it would certainly be idle for us to speculate as to how far they might possibly be tenanted by creatures resembling those found on this earth.

CHAPTER III.

THE SEMICOLON.

Sentence unity, and consequent freedom from distractive effect in reading, depend, not only upon the nice arrangement of the elements of the sentence, but upon the picture they present, through punctuation, to the eye; for unless proper notice of the relations between these elements be given to the reader, he will make wrong combinations, and so produce confusion. This is illustrated in almost every sentence so far considered, although we have been dealing, principally, with single words, or groups of words used as single words.

We now come to deal with the larger divisions of the sentence, each part being considered as a whole, and in relation to some other part or parts. Such divisions are marked by the semicolon and the colon, although each of these marks often indicates minor divisions of the parts of the sentence.

89. The following are the names of the Deity and Jesus Christ:—

1. Jehovah, Lord, God; Creator, Father, Preserver, Governor; the Eternal, the Almighty, the All-wise; the Supreme Being; the Holy Spirit.

2. The Messiah, the Anointed; the Son, the Savior, the Redeemer; the Holy One; Prophet, Teacher, Master; Judge of the World.

Commas would here be sufficient to disconnect each word or group of words constituting a name; but there is a systematic grouping of names that the writer wishes to reveal, and

which, perhaps, would not occur to many readers if attention were not directed to it by suitable marks.

As the semicolon stands next to the comma in relative value, this mark is, obviously, the proper one with which to indicate the larger groups into which the names are divided.

The grouping, of course, depends upon the meaning of the language. The words in the first group are the primary terms for the Deity; in the second, the names of the Deity in relation to man; in the third, the names derived from the attributes of the Deity; etc.

The semicolons here do not mark the greater parts of a sentence, but subdivide such parts; and it should be noted that the subdivision is not based upon the number of names in a part, the semicolon being used to mark a division containing a single name, as well as a division containing two, three, or more names. The semicolon before the "etc." ending the second sentence preceding, makes "etc." stand for additional groups. If a comma were placed before it, it would be a part of the preceding clause. Effective grouping of this kind is seen in Macaulay's graphic and beautiful description of India, wherein he depicts Burke's knowledge of that country.

89-1. India and its inhabitants were not to him, as to most Englishmen, mere names and abstractions, but a real country and a real people. The burning sun; the strange vegetation of the palm and the cocoa-tree; the rice-field and the tank; the huge trees, older than the Mogul Empire, under which the village crowds assemble; the thatched roof of the peasant's hut, and the rich tracery of the mosque, where the imaum prayed with his face to Mecca; the drums, and banners, and gaudy idols; the devotee swinging in the air; the graceful maiden, with the pitcher on her head, descending the steps to the river-side; the black faces, the long beards, the yellow streaks of sect; the turbans and the flowing robes; the spears and the silver maces; the elephants with their canopies of state; the gorgeous palanquin of the prince, and the close litter of the noble lady—all those things were to him as the objects amidst which his own life had been passed—as the ob-

jects which lay on the road between Beaconsfield and St. James's Street.

The value of such punctuation will appear in comparing this passage, as above printed, with the same passage as it appears in many reprints. The following extract is taken from a recently published work on composition, edited by a university professor:—

* * * * the rice-field; the tank; * * * * the thatched roof of the peasant's hut; the rich tracery of the mosque where the imaum prays with his face to Mecca; * * * the graceful maiden, with the pitcher on her head descending the steps to the river-side; the black faces; the long beards; the yellow streaks of sect; the turbans and the flowing robes, the spears and the silver maces; etc.

By such punctuation the tank is taken out of the rice-field; the contrast between hut and mosque is lost; the absence of the comma before "where" makes the imaum pray at a particular mosque; not the maiden, but her head, is descending the steps; beards are separated from faces, and yellow streaks of sect may be on fence posts for aught the reader knows; and turbans and flowing robes, emblems of rank, are put on spear and mace bearers.

By such punctuation the beauty of the picture is entirely lost in a mere catalogue of things seen in India; and this is not literature.

The punctuation of the following letter, from the last Census Report, further emphasizes the value of proper grouping by means of marks:—

89-2. I have the honor to transmit herewith the statistical tables, with the necessary descriptive and explanatory matter, of mortality; the insane, feeble-minded, deaf and dumb, and blind; crime, pauperism, and benevolence; education; churches; wealth, debt, and taxation; mineral industries; insurance; foreign born population, and manufactures, forming Part II of the Compendium of the Eleventh Census of the United States.

The need of a comma before the final conjunction in a series was discussed under 3 and 4. The same reasoning requires a semicolon before the final conjunction in a semicolon-divided series, as is forcibly illustrated in this letter, the use of the comma after "population" leaving the reader in doubt as to whether "population" and "manufactures" constitute one or two groups. This doubt is further increased by the presence, before the first noun, of an adjective which does not belong to the second, and which would make the comma indispensable if its meaning were such as to make it applicable to both nouns, while it belonged only to the first. The omission of the word "born" would furnish such an instance. As the two subjects do constitute separate groups, the semicolon should be used after "population,"—i. e., before the final "and."

It will be seen in what has been said of the semicolon, that it, like the comma, is a disjunction; but its influence extends farther than that of the comma, as the next sentence shows.

90. Mere "use and wont" can accustom us to anything; even to the creation of the world upon a second repetition, if you would believe Carlyle.

If the sentence ended with "repetition," a comma would be sufficient to mark the relation between "anything" and the following explanatory group of words; but this group of words is followed by a modifier that may apply, in sense, to the preceding group, and would apply to it, were the comma used after "anything." This would make good sense; but it would ascribe to Carlyle the common saying expressed in the words preceding the first mark of punctuation. In order, then, that the meaning of the last group may be confined to the group immediately preceding it, and be cut off from the first group, the larger mark of punctuation is used. This divides the sentence into two parts, the second of which is subdivided by a comma. Unless a sentence is well constructed, such relations cannot be shown by punctuation, and the reader cannot determine what limitations the writer wishes to

put upon his own language. It is perhaps safe to say that in all such cases the writer himself does not see the obscurity of his language, nor does he have an exact meaning to convey.

Likewise in the following the semicolon is required by the explanatory modifiers beginning with "when," which must not be permitted to reach back of "joined in the procession," preceding the semicolon, for they belong to the explanatory term beginning with "just":—

90-1. Everybody old enough and strong enough to walk joined in the procession; just as everybody at Lourdes joined in the great procession in the Fete Dieu, when the hundreds were multiplied to thousands, when the mountain side at dusk seemed on fire with myriads of twinkling tapers, and the pilgrim chant, plaintive, monotonous, and unmusical, was borne by the night winds far away over the valley of the Gave.

Two processions are here spoken of, the second being somewhat minutely described, and its location given. If a comma were substituted for the semicolon, the group of words beginning with "just" and ending with "Dieu" would be an intermediate term, and all that follows would apply to the first of the processions, locating it in the valley of the Gave, where it did not take place.

91. We were tired, we were hungry, and it was growing late; but should we ignore these melancholy conditions, and push bravely on for Lille?

The first part of this sentence consists of three groups of words, each of which is a sentence; but the movement is so rapid and the relations of the thoughts so close, each sentence being practically equivalent to an adjective (tired, hungry, or late), commas are sufficient to disconnect them. All that follows, is put into contrast with all that precedes; and the entire sentence is divided into two larger parts. Commas having been used to separate the smaller divisions, a rela-

tively larger mark must be used to separate the larger divisions.

It is interesting to note that the three uses of the semicolon exemplified in 89, 90, and 91, are almost identical; and yet all uses of the mark fall under one of these models.

Punctuation nowhere else reveals the meaning of language more certainly or more readily than in its division of the sentence into parts which, though subdivided one or more times, are to be considered and compared as wholes. Nowhere else are so frequent errors made by good writers, notwithstanding the simplicity of the reasoning, and the manifest purpose, governing the use of such marks; and upon no other subject in punctuation are the rules so obscure.

As illustrative of the truth and justice of these remarks, I quote from Mr. Wilson, who says (page 113):—

"When a sentence consists of three or more clauses, united by a conjunction, none of which are susceptible of division, a semicolon should be put between those which are least connected in sense, and a comma only between the others; as,—

[91-1.] "The woods may disappear, but the spirit of them will never now; for it has been felt by a poet, and we can feel forever what he felt."

The attempt, in the rule, to define the sentence, produces, at least in my own mind, utter confusion. It matters not whether the clauses are susceptible or not susceptible of division. We are concerned first with the meaning of the sentence, which can be obtained only by proper grouping and comparison of thoughts, and then with the separation of each group by marks whose relative values shall show the relations of the groups. As this sentence reads, it is said that a poet has felt that "the woods may disappear," and that "the spirit of them will never now." But that "the woods may disappear" is a physical fact known to everybody, the poetic fact being that the spirit will not disappear; and the "spirit of them" will remain because it has been felt by a poet and because we can feel it.

In order, then, to show that what follows "now" does not reach back to the first clause, but is confined to the second, the semicolon must be placed elsewhere in the sentence.

With this interpretation of the language, the sentence should read as follows:—

91-1-a. The woods may disappear; but the spirit of them will never now, for it has been felt by a poet, and we can feel forever what he felt.

The punctuation, as it pertains to the comma and the semicolon, of a sentence divided into members with a subdivided member, may be shown diagrammatically.

a. .....; ....., but .....
b. ....., ...; but .....
c. .....; .....; but .....

It makes no difference what conjunction connects the members, or the parts of a subdivided member, of "a" and "b"; nor will the meaning or punctuation be changed if there be but one conjunction in each sentence. The same is not true of "c," which can never be good punctuation, because the relations of the parts will not be made obvious by the marks.

It will readily be observed that "a" illustrates the punctuation of 90 and 91-1-a; and "b," that of 91. As the point is a very essential one, this punctuation being so frequently used, further illustrative examples will be given.

91-2. To this he was never indifferent; possibly not quite indifferent enough, since this is a company in which one does well not to be too anxious about such matters, or about any matters.

91-3. During the present session of congress bills have been introduced, as usual, providing for the repeal of the registration clauses of the act of 1792; but nothing will be done with them, and nothing ought to be done with them, for the object of the demand is to give foreign shipbuilders a market for their surplus ships.

91-4. Holmes did not, like Lowell, voice the intense moral earnestness of New England; nor did he, like Whittier and Emerson, compass its highest reaches of spiritual elevation; but its moral health, its keen, swift movement of mind, and its untiring curiosity and energy were his in high degree.

The last sentence is divided into three parts by two semicolons; and yet there can be no doubt that "but" introduces a clause that is in contrast with all that precedes it, while to be so it must reach back over the semicolon before "nor." But there is no more reason, under such punctuation, for the combination of the first and second parts into one member, than for the combination of the second and third parts into one, because "nor" can reach just as far forward as "but" can reach backward. If, then, the sense requires the division of the sentence into two members, a subdivided member must not have within itself as large a mark as that which separates the members. The sense of 91-4 unmistakably requires the semicolon before "but"; and this punctuation, in turn, requires the comma before "nor." Independent of this point, there is little need of a semicolon before "nor," for there is nothing in the language preceding it to suggest a relation between the noun that precedes it and a noun that might follow it, while the meaning readily points to the repetition of the verb, and the repetition of the same verb form (did) tends to preserve the continuity of thought, even without any mark.

The use of the semicolon between parts of a sentence complete in themselves and connected by "and," "for," "but," etc., presents to the writer on punctuation a difficulty that is easily gotten over by formulating a general and arbitrary rule; but such rule must have a good many exceptions, and even then will often result in punctuation not well calculated either to reveal the sense of language or to preserve the continuity of thought,—the two ends of all punctuation. In the absence of such a rule, the inexperienced, and perhaps the most experienced, writer may appear somewhat inconsistent in his punctuation; but it is better to be inconsistent than to

use too many semicolons, if by being inconsistent fewer and smaller marks may be used, for there has long been a marked tendency among writers to throw overboard every mark that can be spared, and to use the smallest marks that will suffice to accomplish the ends of punctuation. Though we may not be able to put in exact verbal form directions for this punctuation, a study of the relations of the thoughts expressed by the groups of words to be separated, will reveal its spirit. The general rule given by most authors for this punctuation is to use a semicolon between the members of a sentence, when each member is a complete sentence (grammarians call such members clauses). The rule is not entirely bad; but such punctuation will often fail to reveal the exact relation of language so punctuated. For instance, "for" may introduce a clause explanatory of all that precedes it, or only of what immediately precedes it. A semicolon before it, showing the sentence to be divided into two members, would indicate the latter. The real difference between "for" and "because," "as," etc. (see Century Dictionary), is not now generally observed; and therefore the rule for the semicolon before "for" when connecting clauses, will not apply, and the sense alone must determine what mark should be used. Very many illustrations of this punctuation are to be found in these pages. The semicolon is indispensable if the sentence is divided by two or more conjunctions into three or more groups of words, and the meaning of the language is such that one conjunction in the sentence may connect either the parts of a member or the members of the sentence. This is illustrated in the diagrams following 91-1-a. As the diagrams show, the same principle applies to a sentence containing but one conjunction. To preserve one's continuity of thought, the semicolon is necessary in a sentence in which the use of the comma still permits a false relation to arise momentarily, as will be seen in the following sentence, originally punctuated with a comma.

92. The town is contemplative in character; and boisterous gaiety sits uneasily upon its tranquil streets.

A comma before "and" is not here sufficient notice of the change in the direction of the thought, because when the reader reaches "boisterous" he naturally expects another adjective formed like that which precedes the conjunction,—such, for instance, as "boisterous only on gala days," which would require a comma before it. If the comma is used, the continuity of thought will be broken, and the sentence will not read smoothly. The semicolon at once notifies the reader of the change in construction.

In the next sentence no such difficulty arises, because all relations are real relations; and therefore the comma may be used, though the use of the semicolon could not be called improper or bad punctuation.

92-1. These qualities are not common in kings accustomed to accept devotion or service as their due, and even from Queen Victoria such strong words read strangely.

In the sentence preceding the above example, "and" does not introduce a conclusion drawn from the group of words between it and the preceding comma, for such group may be omitted without affecting the sense; nor does "though" introduce a group of words related to all that precedes, because the meaning of the language shows the relation to be between this group, and the group following the semicolon. Therefore the four groups of words in the sentence are themselves grouped into two larger groups by the semicolon.

An essential purpose of a mark of punctuation is to throw the connection away from one or both words standing next to it. This was exemplified in the consideration of Sentence 2, and shown in the diagrams "b" and "d" under the same; and it has appeared throughout the present chapter.

We shall now consider a somewhat different and more direct application of the principle.

93. There are many cases of happy marriages between literary people; that is, between men and women who are authors or writers.

With a comma before "that is," the reader would expect

the relation to be between "people" and some word or group of words explanatory of "people." Thus: "Duels are affairs between gentlemen, that is, men so styling themselves."

It may be said that the repetition of "between" would prevent such a mistake. This is very true, but the larger mark gives immediate notice of a fact that would not appear until what follows "that is" had been reached. In this particular sentence the use of the comma would not be bad punctuation; but the sentence falls readily into a class that requires another mark. The following is perhaps a better illustration of the punctuation:—

93-2. He saw that London society was, in truth, a kind of microcosm, or the whole world in a little; a place where you had to make and keep your own footing.

The semicolon makes "a place" summarize what precedes it, while a comma would put "a place" in the same relation to "microcosm" that "world" sustains, as if the language read, "a kind of microcosm," or "a world," or "a place," etc.

Instead of the semicolon, as above used, many writers prefer the dash, and I so use it myself; but the same principle is involved.

While such construction as is exhibited in the next sentence would better be avoided, it is not uncommon.

93-1. Thus I have given you my opinion, as well as that of a great majority of both houses here, relating to this weighty affair; upon which I am confident you may securely reckon.

A comma after "affair" would make what follows an explanatory adjective modifying "affair"; but the semicolon indicates another relation, to be sought from the context, which readily shows "opinion" to be the antecedent of "which."

The same use of the semicolon is seen before the introduction of one or more particulars with an intervening connecting word, whose use is purely parenthetical. In this manner "as" is used throughout this work to introduce examples. Coming between the groups of words that are in apposition,

it needs to be set off by commas; but the place of the first comma is taken by the semicolon, which is required for reasons now under consideration.

This use of the semicolon is not affected by the necessary subdivision of the particulars by other marks; yet in case semicolons seem to be required between the particulars, it may be better to use a relatively larger mark between the members of the sentence. This is done in the Century Dictionary (see quotation under Sentence 10-1), the colon marking the separation between the definition and the illustration. The colon is also used in like manner in this work, in two or three sentences.

The semicolon is necessarily used to separate comma-divided groups of words, and yet no mark may be necessary to separate the entire group of words thus divided and subdivided, from what precedes or follows. This larger group may be subject, predicate, or object of the verb, or the object of a preposition; or it may sustain other grammatical relation in the sentence. In the next two sentences no mark is required, or permissible, between the first group and what precedes.

94. The Scotchman of the world, the gay puritan, insists upon the few articles of his belief when he is openly preaching, as in A Christmas Sermon; or covertly preaching, as in Old Mortality; or sketching and traveling, as with a donkey.

The comma after "preaching" is required to show that what follows is an explanatory, not a restrictive, element; and the semicolons are required for the proper grouping of what follows.

94-1. The real consideration is how shall it grow in sympathy and tenderness and consideration for others; how shall it feed itself on great thoughts and noble aims; and how shall it be swift to recognize and avail itself of those opportunities of usefulness which are its best channels for growth; how shall it hold its clear, direct, and intimate relations with the Divine?

The absence of commas after "recognize" and "of," in the third clause of the above, is not good punctuation. Many punctuators would use in this sentence a comma after "is" to mark the beginning of a long and subdivided predicate, as a comma is often used to mark the end of a long subject.

The omission of the conjunction is the cause of much obscurity in language, especially in case the relation between the parts of the sentence is not so apparent as to be seen without effort; and, it seems to me, the marked tendency among modern writers to close such gaps in their sentences with the semicolon, shows an indifference to punctuation that is equalled only by their indifference to the logic of language. If the reader will open almost any periodical or book, he will find many such sentences, and he will surely be puzzled to tell what relation exists between the parts. If the reader cannot tell without an effort whether the relation is one indicated by "and," "for," "but," or some other conjunction, the omission of the conjunction is, to say the least, annoying to one who seeks to obtain the exact meaning of what he reads.

Thus, in the following sentence, the reader expects a verb to follow the nouns after the semicolon; and when one does not, he loses the connection, and is obliged to go back, and adjust the relation between what precedes and what follows the semicolon:—

94-2. Walt Whitman is the globe itself; all seas, lands, forests, climates, storms, snows, sunshines, rains, of universal earth.

In a sentence divided into two members by a semicolon, the same verb being required in each member, the second verb is often omitted. This omission is indicated by the use of the comma, which thus divides the second member into two parts, whose relation to each other is at once suggested by the similarity, in form of expression, between the members of the sentence.

95. Truth belongs to the man; error, to his age.

If the members of a short sentence are connected by a

conjunction, the comma may take the place of the semicolon, and no mark will be necessary in the second member, the implied and obvious relations of the words rendering it unnecessary. Thus:—

95-1. Truth belongs to the man, but error to his age.

EXAMPLES.

Point out which marks are used in these examples agreeably to the reasons discussed in the preceding pages.

There is purpose in pain; otherwise it were devilish.

Want of intellect makes a village an Eden; a college, a sty.

But not thieves; nor robbers; nor mobs; nor rioters, insurgents, or rebels.

Committee on Resolutions: John Smith, chairman; Wm. Brown, John Doe, Richard Roe.

The evils are very real, grave, and widespread; whether a trifle more or less so than these rough estimates make out is of small account.

We have seen the danger of permitting the chairman to select all committees; and, in the selection made, he has shown that the danger is real.

Wealth has greatly accumulated; machinery has come to do a large part of our work; and all sorts of people have more or less leisure on their hands.

His fidelity was unconditional, unobstructive, uncomplaining; he was willing to give much and receive little; he consented even to be forgotten, while he never forgot.

The high school course includes arithmetic, algebra, and geometry; grammar and composition; ancient and modern history; geography, natural history, and astronomy.

"I lived with words," Mr. Stevenson says; and the result is that formal excellence to which we have now grown accustomed, but which dazzled our judgment at the outset.

Venice, it has been said, differs from all other cities in the sentiment which she inspires. The rest may have admirers; she only, a famous fair one, counts lovers in her train.

The sentences of Seneca are stimulating to the intellect; the sentences of Epictetus are fortifying to the character; the sentences of Marcus Aurelius find their way to the soul.

If there is ever a time to be ambitious, it is not when ambition is easy, but when it is hard. Fight in darkness; fight when you are down; die hard, and you won't die at all.

In the world of reality suffering is not a thing to be read or heard or talked about, but a living truth. Being defied, it maketh for bitterness; or ignored, for selfishness; or accepted, for wisdom.

There are many beautiful letters in Cary's Life of Curtis; there is no other so beautiful as that just written after the death of Lincoln, nor is it possible to read it without a great trembling of the heart.

These ideas I have perhaps insisted on more strongly than any others, for they have been near my heart; they are a part of my life; they seem to me to be the very essence of the religion which I was taught.

Sin and misery appealed most strongly to Holmes, but he invariably saw hope; and despair, that stalks through life making a tragedy of the common event to break the universal heart, had no claim upon his pen.

The causes of war are clearly and concisely stated; the course of the campaign and of the several battles, the daily life of the soldier in camp, the political results of the appeal to arms, are intelligently described.

The pointed arch is beautiful; it is the termination of every leaf that shakes in summer wind, and its most fortunate associations are directly borrowed from the trefoiled grass of the field, or from the stars of its flowers.

There was an hour in which I slipped the anchor of my faith; I cut the cable of my belief; I no longer moored myself by the coast of revelation; I allowed the vessel to drift before the wind, and thus started on the voyage of infidelity.

The writer has sought to give the popular and usual acceptation of each phrase, in much the same rough and general shape in which it would stand in the mind of the trained lawyer; only occasionally adding a hint of its more correct and exact meaning.

Mr. Lowell's freedom of speech sometimes left courtiers aghast, but gave no offence to the Queen. It may have amazed her because of its originality; it certainly increased her respect and liking for the loyal gentleman who thought the ties of humanity universal.

Legislatures have declined; municipal misgovernment has brought humiliation; the spoilsman has everywhere been active, if not everywhere dominant; the inflationist, repeatedly rebuffed, has repeatedly risen; and the demagogue has revived a forgotten part in the Jingo.

So little work was found for Sebastien Cabot that he passed

into the service of Spain, and turned his attention to voyages in the South Atlantic. Such scanty record was kept of the voyages of 1497 and 1498 that we cannot tell what land the Cabots first saw; whether it was the bleak coast of Northern Labrador, or some point as far south as Cape Breton, is still a matter of dispute.

ERRONEOUS EXAMPLES.

Point out what marks are used in the following sentences contrary to the reasons discussed in Chapter III.

No situation could be more commanding for the head of a city; none better chosen for noble prospects.

The second folio, reprinted from the first, was published in 1632; the third folio in 1664, and the fourth in 1685.

The mills began working night and day; trade revived; and then came reports of serious damage to the crop in the field.

His fame is great; and it will, we have no doubt, be lasting; but it is fame of a peculiar kind, and indeed marvellously resembles infamy.

A panic arose: every one crowded to the doors; the passage became choked; seven persons lost their lives; and twenty-eight were seriously injured.

Public men may be of moderate means; they may even be poor; but not many of them, moving in general society, have the moral courage to seem to be so.

Virtue and wisdom are an up-hill road, where people do not advance without some effort; folly and vice a down-hill path, where it requires some effort not to advance.

The party resumed the administration of affairs with all its old and evil passions intensified; and with the determination to perpetuate itself in power at all hazards it passed this bill of abominations.

They wore their caps or not as pleased them, they sang or talked as suited them, they laughed or sneezed, they sulked or snarled, they were noisy or silent, precisely as the whim of the individual prescribed.

Some men, it is true, do more than gain an honest living; but this is the best thing that any man does; as, on the other hand, shining intellectually is the poorest thing that any man does, or can possibly learn to do.

Of course by bright Americans I mostly mean bright American women; and bright American women are apt to speak very much as clever people write; or say, as the characters in clever people's novels speak.

CHAPTER IV.

THE COLON.

The colon is an invaluable mark to the writer who seeks to maintain sentence and paragraph unity, and clearly to reveal just what he wants to say; yet many writers would dispense with it entirely. Indeed, there is a tendency among modern writers to substitute the semicolon for the colon; and, it may be safely asserted, there is an equal tendency among such writers towards obscurity of expression.

In addition to one or more conventional uses, the colon has two distinctively characteristic uses, and its presence in a sentence is notice of the exact relation between what has preceded and what is to follow. These uses may be defined as that of apposition and that of balance. As the principle of the latter was discussed and exemplified in the preceding chapter, its consideration need not here occupy much time. A sentence or two will suffice for this use of the mark.

The following passage of Scripture is punctuated (1) as it recently appeared in a leading literary and religious journal, in an article by one of the most scholarly divines in the country; (2) as it is found in the common version of the New Testament; and (3) as it appears in the revised version (II. Timothy i. 16.)

96. The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain; but, when he was in Rome, he sought me out diligently, and found me.

96-1. The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiph-

orus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain:

But, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me.

96-2. The Lord grant mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus: for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain; but, when he was in Rome, he sought me diligently, and found me.

The counterpart of this sentence is found in 91-1, except that the members of the latter are not so much subdivided.

As to the modes of punctuation in the above, there can be no doubt that that in 96-2 (revised version) is most nearly in harmony with the sense. This punctuation divides the sentence into two parts at "for"; that in 96 divides it into three parts, giving rise to the difficulties exhibited in "c" under 91, and exemplified in 91-4; and that in 96-1 (common version) divides it at "but," putting all that follows in contrast with all that precedes, which is not in accordance with the sense.

The semicolon before "but" in 96-2 is not satisfactory, inasmuch as it puts what follows it in contrast with the group of words between "but" and "for," while the contrast is particularly with "was not ashamed of my chain." In order to make the punctuation conform to this view of the exact meaning of the language, it might follow the punctuation exhibited in 91-1-a. Thus:—

96-3. The Lord grant mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain, but, when he was in Rome, he sought me diligently, and found me.

In the following the colon is indispensable, as the contrast is between all that precedes it and what follows it, the colon balancing the members of the sentence:—

97. Athens' freedom and her power have, for more than twenty centuries, been annihilated; her people have degenerated into timid slaves; her language, into a barbarous jar-

gon; her temples have been given up to the successive depredations of Romans, Turks, and Scotchmen: but her intellectual empire is imperishable.

The most common use of the colon is that of the formal introduction of particulars, or of a body of matter considered as a whole,—such as a speech, a quotation, etc. It will readily be observed that the matter so introduced is in apposition with what precedes. The colon is essential in such places only when required by its relative value; but good usage retains it in some places where it is not essential.

98. I purchased the following articles: one dozen pens, one ream of paper, and one box of envelopes.

98-1. Be our plain answer this: The throne we honor is the people's choice; the laws we reverence are our brave fathers' legacy; the faith we follow teaches us to live in bonds of charity with all mankind, and die with hope of bliss beyond the grave.

98-2. The speaker arose, and addressed the audience as follows:—

"The occasion that brings us together," etc.

98-3. The speaker said: "The occasion," etc.

The relation of apposition is obvious in 98, 98-1, and 98-2; but in 98-3 the matter following the colon appears to be the object of "said," although cut off from it by a mark next to the period in relative value. In regard to this punctuation, in 98-3, it may be said that the matter is in apposition with something understood,—such as "these things"; or the punctuation may be ascribed to custom, which would easily grow out of the punctuation exhibited in the other sentences under consideration.

When the matter following the colon is composed of more than one sentence, such matter should be identified, as a whole, in some plain manner: by being quoted, put in italics, numbered and so written as to show that it is apart from the other matter of the composition, or in some other way.

The use of the colon to show apposition, even in places

where, ordinarily, only a comma would be used, probably arises from its use in similarly formed sentences containing members subdivided by commas and semicolons, as in 98-1. From a usage thus based upon the relative value of the colon, it is easy to see how it might be retained for the enumeration of particulars in general, and for the introduction of even very short statements. In legal phraseology, particularly, it is often found where a comma, or, as will be shown elsewhere, a comma and a dash, would take its place; but such use of the colon is not to be commended. Thus:—

98-4. In their original structure, a bill of exchange and a promissory note do not strongly resemble each other. In a bill there are three original parties: drawer, drawee, and payee; in a note, only two: maker and payee.

It may not seem clear to the reader why the colon is said to be the proper mark in 98, and not in 98-4, since in each it indicates the relation of apposition. The form of the introductory words in 98 is such as is commonly used when the particulars are long and complex, each requiring within itself other marks, or each constituting a paragraph. The colon thus maintains the relative values of the marks in the sentence; and it is retained in all formal introductions, though often not essential, more for uniformity of use than because of any particular reason. The form of the language in 98-4 is that of apposition, treated in 47, although the words in apposition with "parties," while themselves separated by commas, are not shown as a group with a common relation to "parties." This grouping, however, may be accomplished in a special way, as will soon appear.

Thus far the colon has been considered in its relation to the comma and semicolon only; and few, if any, writers on punctuation consider it in its more important relation, namely, to the period. It is its use in this relation which so many writers, and readers for the press, ignore, and would dispense with; but probably for no other reason than a lack of knowledge of the mark's value in such usage.

Paragraph and sentence unity can hardly be preserved

without frequent use of the colon,—the use determined by its value as compared with the period, rather than with the comma and the semicolon. Nor can force and clearness in composition be attained without sentence and paragraph unity.

It is essential, before proceeding with the consideration of this use of the colon, that we have a clear understanding of sentence and paragraph unity.

What is a sentence? "A sentence is a combination of words expressing a single complete thought."—Genung. "A sentence is the first complete, organic product of thinking."—Bascom.

What is a paragraph? "A paragraph is a connected series of sentences constituting the development of a single topic. It is virtually an expanded sentence."—Genung. "The paragraph is a collection of sentences with unity of purpose."—Bain. "A paragraph is the unit of written discourse."—Hart.

As sentences are grouped together to form the paragraph, and paragraphs to form the composition, every sentence should relate to the topic of the paragraph, and every paragraph to the subject of the composition.

Another tendency among modern writers may be here noted. It is the tendency to make all sentences as short as possible. One of the dangers of such use of language is the destruction of paragraph unity, which renders the writer's line of thought difficult to follow, and makes the composition unpleasant to read. This fault will be detected by quite unobservant and inexperienced readers, although they may not know its cause.

That use of the colon which marks a division more suggestive of the period than of the semicolon, and which we have called essentially that of apposition, is almost indispensable in maintaining paragraph unity. We must study the mark in the paragraph, in order to comprehend its full force.

99. Zola's gifts and his technical excellence Mr. Lowell could admire, but he thought the use the Frenchman made of these talents an unpardonable sin. The coarseness in Field-

ing, he used to say, is, in so far as it is not of his time, incidental; the obscenities of Zola are of deliberate choice. Neither art nor letters had anything to say to them; they were commercial; they sold his books.

The above is from an article in Harper's Monthly by Mr. George W. Smalley, and therefore may be considered good usage; but the quotaton contains two uses of the semicolon which cannot be reconciled with each other.

The sentence beginning with "The coarseness" may, for present consideration, be reduced to the following forms:—

99-a. He used to say the coarseness of Fielding is incidental; the obscenities of Zola are of deliberate choice.

99-b. The coarseness of Fielding is incidental; the obscenities of Zola are of deliberate choice.

In 99-a, which conforms, essentially at least, to the original, the semicolon divides the compound object of "say," the parts of the object sustaining to each other an unmistakable relation, that of co-ordination. The same relation between the parts exists in 99-b.

While commas might be substituted for the semicolons in 99-a and 99-b, the parts of each sentence being without other marks, the semicolon is the better mark, because the separation of the parts is greater than that usually indicated by the comma.

Turn now to the last sentence in 99, and compare it with the above. It is divided into three parts by two semicolons, which indicates that the parts are of equal rank, and have a mutual relation. Are such relation and rank found in this sentence? Certainly not, for what follows "them" is simply explanatory of what precedes—is in apposition with it. The sentence is divided into two parts at "them"; or rather there are two sentences, which, if they stood alone, might very properly be separated by a period. But as they stand in a paragraph, the second sentence having for its subject the subject of the first sentence, instead of the topic of the paragraph, the unity of sentence and paragraph will be main-

tained by making one sentence of the two groups of words. The only two marks, then, to be considered for the place are the colon and the period. The separation being sufficiently great for the period, but paragraph unity precluding its use, the colon, which is next in relative value, must be used. The sentence would thus read as follows:—

99-1. Neither art nor letters had anything to say to them: they were commercial; they sold his books.

The true relation of apposition, as it was seen in 47 and, in a modified form, in 10, is shown by the fact that all that follows the colon in this sentence may be omitted without affecting the sense in the least, for what follows is simply explanation, or detail. It may appear to some readers that the two groups of words following the colon, in 99-1, bear to each other such a relation as we have been considering; but I do not think this is so, for two distinct qualities are mentioned, and therefore the effect of the two clauses is cumulative. If, however, such relation exists between them, it should be shown by the colon, which, in turn, would require a period after "them."

From the foregoing we may draw a conclusion in the nature of a rule for this particular use of the colon. It is this: When a writer makes a statement in a sentence, complete in itself as regards form, and, finding such statement not quite clear or definite enough, he wishes to explain or enlarge it, he may do so by adding another complete sentence covering the same ground, the two sentences being merged into one by use of the colon.

The two classes of sentences illustrated in 99-b and 99-1, are easily distinguished; for the semicolon separates clauses that have a common bearing and that are cumulative in effect, while the colon separates clauses of which the latter iterates or explains the former.

As this particular use of the colon has special reference to the place, in the paragraph, of the parts separated by the mark, it should be considered in the paragraph, where it will be seen in comparison with the period.

The following interesting passage is from Matthew Arnold's "On Translating Homer." (The text followed is that of the edition of Mr. Arnold's works published by the Macmillan Company, which was printed, I believe, under the author's supervision.) But before taking up the paragraph, let us consider by itself the particular sentence to which attention will be directed.

99-2. Homer presents his thought to you just as it wells from the source of his mind: Mr. Tennyson carefully distils his thought before he will part with it.

The punctuation of this sentence, standing alone, conforms to the rule laid down by Mr. Wilson, and generally followed by subsequent writers, who, as has been remarked, are essentially copyists of his work; but, as has also been said, the tendency of modern writers is to substitute the semicolon for the colon, and often without proper discrimination. I approve the tendency as exhibited in the punctuation of this sentence, which is identical with 99-b; and I do so because the sentence readily falls into the class of sentences divided by the semicolon, and because by putting it into the semicolon class, the colon retains only two distinct usages, so that, wherever met, it gives definite notice that one of two relations exists between what has been read and what is to follow,—the relation of balance or of apposition.

Now, let us see what relations the paragraph sets up in the sentence under consideration.

99-3. * * * but when Mr. Spedding talks of a plainness of thought like Homer's, of a plainness of speech like Homer's, and says that he finds these constantly in Mr. Tennyson's poetry, I answer that these I do not find there at all. Mr. Tennyson is a most distinguished and charming poet; but the very essential characteristic of his poetry is, it seems to me, an extreme subtlety and curious elaborateness of thought, an extreme subtlety and curious elaborateness of expression. In the best and most characteristic productions of his genius,

these characteristics are most prominent. * * * The essential bent of his poetry is towards such expressions as—

Now lies the Earth all Danae to the stars, etc.

And this way of speaking is the least plain, the most un-Homeric, which can possibly be conceived. Homer presents his thought to you just as it wells from the source of his mind: Mr. Tennyson carefully distils his thought before he will part with it. Hence comes, in the expression of the thought, a heightened and elaborate air. In Homer's poetry it is all natural thoughts in natural words; in Mr. Tennyson's poetry it is all distilled thoughts in distilled words. Exactly this heightening and elaboration may be observed in Mr. Spedding's

While the steeds mouthed their corn aloof,

(an expression which might have been Mr. Tennyson's) on which I have already commented.*

In the entire paragraph sentence grows into and out of sentence with an evenness of flow characteristic of the master of style, until the colon is reached, when the least observant reader must feel a jar; but if not here, he surely will in what follows, for "Hence," which introduces an inference from what precedes it, begins a sentence, and therefore the inference must be from the preceding sentence or sentences. But what does the meaning of the language clearly and unmistakably show? It shows that the sentence beginning with "Hence" draws an inference from what is between it and the colon,—that is, from one-half of the preceding sentence. It shows, also, that the sentence beginning "Homer presents" ends with "air." If the paragraph ended with the sentence under consideration, this sentence would be a summary of what precedes; but what precedes and what follows the sentence pull it apart at the colon, and the paragraph is summarized by the sentence beginning "In Homer's poetry," whose place is after the sentence that follows it.

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*The use of the comma after "aloof" will be considered in the chapter on marks of parenthesis.

For the sake of comparison, let us punctuate and transpose a part of 99-3 in accordance with the suggestions made.

99-3-a. And this way of speaking is the least plain, the most un-Homeric, which can possibly be conceived. Homer presents his thought to you just as it wells from the source of his mind: Mr. Tennyson carefully distils his thought before he will part with it; hence comes from the expression of the thought a heightened and elaborate air. Exactly this heightening and elaboration may be observed in Mr. Spedding's

While the steeds mouthed their corn aloof

(an expression which might have been Mr. Tennyson's), on which I have already commented. In Homer's poetry it is all natural thoughts in natural words; in Mr. Tennyson's poetry it is all distilled thoughts in distilled words.

This conception of the meaning of the language requires a semicolon after "it," which, in turn, requires the colon after "mind," but for the sake of balance only.

I think it would be difficult for the person—author or proof-reader—who used the colon in the sentence beginning "Homer presents," and the semicolon in that beginning "In Homer," to point out a shade of meaning in the one different from that of the other, or to tell why the same mark was not used in the two sentences.

One more sentence, of similar character and from the same source, will suffice to show how the punctuation affects the picture presented to the observant reader.

94-4. Homer has not Shakespeare's variations: Homer always composes as Shakespeare composes at his best; Homer is always simple and intelligible, as Shakespeare is often; Homer is never quaint and antiquated, as Shakespeare is sometimes.

If a semicolon were substituted for the colon in the above, the sentence would be divided into four parts of equal rank, each part giving a particular, distinct from the other parts, and cumulative whole. But this is not the mean-

ing of the language, for the sense is complete at the end of the first group of words, and all that follows is by way of explanation or iteration. The language that follows the colon makes the same statement as that which precedes it; and the colon is used to show this fact, and not because the second clause is composed of particulars, or because its parts are separated by semicolons.

The next sentence, describing the downfall of Robespierre, contains the error suggested above,—i. e., the semicolon is improperly used for the colon.

99-5. I regard his ruin to have been inevitable; he had no organized force; his partisans, though numerous, were not enrolled; his instrument was the force of opinion and of terror; accordingly, not being able to surprise his foes by a strong hand, after the fashion of Cromwell, he sought to intimidate them.

All that follows the first clause of this sentence is as clearly explanatory of "inevitable," as is all that follows the first clause of 94-4 explanatory of "variations"; and therefore the same mark, the colon, is needed at the end of the clause.

A similar relation, that of apposition, exists between certain words or groups of words, and what comes after them; and they are followed by the colon, especially when used in such a way as clearly to show this relation. The following are those in most common use: Yes, No, Again, To proceed, In conclusion, To sum up all, etc.

99-6. Do you think the expenditures can be reduced? Yes: I think they can be reduced very largely.

Note.—This use of the colon after "yes" and "no" is not now adhered to by many authors, and it is quite rarely seen in newspapers. It may, therefore, be well to follow custom, and use the semicolon with these words.

Yes, no, again, and many other such words, are often used as mere expletives, when they are treated as parenthetical expressions, and take the comma. It is only in their more formal use, where they are made to stand as the equivalent

of what follows, that they take the colon, or, as has been noted, the semicolon.

This same relation of parts, marked by the colon, is seen in book titles. Thus:—

99-7. A Portrait: Notes on the Life of Arnold.

If the conjunction is used between the parts, the colon gives way to the semicolon before, and the comma after, the conjunction.

99-8. A Portrait; or, Notes on the Life of Arnold.

A colon is used also in book imprints between a firm name and the place of publication. Thus:—

99-9. The Growth of British Policy: An Historical Essay. By Sir J. R. Seeley. Cambridge: University Press; New York: Macmillan.

Although some writers prefer the comma, the colon is generally used between the name of the author and his work in citations, which appear so frequently in the form of footnotes. Thus:—

99-10. Adam Smith: Wealth of Nations.

In Bible and other references there is a great variety of punctuation. When such references are of frequent occurrence, and it is necessary to save space, the simplest mode may be used, regardless of any other reason for it. For occasional Bible reference it is preferable either to use a colon between chapter and verse numbers in Arabic numerals, or to use Roman numerals for the chapter number and Arabic numerals for the verse number. Thus:—

99-11. Gen. 6:12, 13. II. Sam. vi. 12, 13.

The colon is used between the figures that indicate the hour, and those that indicate the minutes, in expressing the time of day. Thus:—

99-12. The train arrives at 2:15 p. m.

EXAMPLES.

Point out which marks are used in the following examples agreeably to the reasons discussed in preceding pages.

Terms, as usual: all cash; or part cash, and balance monthly.

Through the entire community the effort of his labors was seen: drunkards became sober, and profligates virtuous.

That he was struck with the promise of the boy was not altogether strange: clergymen on collecting tours are very often much impressed with the high qualities of the children of their hosts.

The Indians are taken by surprise: some are shot down in their cabins; others rush to the river, and are drowned; others push from the shore in their birchen canoes, and are hurried down the cataract.

Here was domestic life in something like its pristine simplicity, a philosopher might have said: the house still subordinate to the man, and the housekeeper not yet a slave to furniture and bric-a-brac.

"There is no sorrow I have thought more about than this," wrote George Eliot: "that one who aspires to live a higher life than the common should fall from that serene height into the soul-wasting struggle with worldly annoyances."

Hamilton's fellow-delegates from New York felt either that he was too much for them or that the whole question was beyond their powers: at any rate, they went home before the close of the Convention, and Hamilton signed alone in behalf of the State.

Barnard was naturally a mathematician and physicist, with a decided bent toward theology; and McCosh was esentially a philosopher and theologian, with strong bias in favor of science: so that they were well fitted to be mediators between the two camps.

Ruskin says that in a kindly and well-bred society, if anybody tries to please them, they try to be pleased; if anybody tries to astonish them, they have the courtesy to be astonished; if people become tiresome, they ask somebody to sing or play: but they do not criticise.

Hence, gloomy doubts and fears!
Dry up your mournful tears;
Join our glad theme:
  Beauty for ashes bring;
Strike each melodious string;
Join heart and voice to sing,
  "Worthy the Lamb!"

Such a household as that of Zacharias and Elizabeth would have all that was beautiful in the religion of the time: devotion towards God; a home of affection and purity; reverence towards all that was sacred in things Divine and human; ungrudging, self-denying, loving charity to the poor; the tenderest regard for the feelings of others, so as not to raise a blush, nor to wound their hearts; above all, intense faith and hope in the higher and better future of Israel.

ERRONEOUS EXAMPLES.

Point out which marks are used in the following examples contrary to the reasons discussed in the preceding pages.

The people's voice is odd; it is, and it is not, the voice of God.

He cared little for poetry; fact, and not fancy, satisfied him.

> Were he my kinsman, brother, or my son,
> It should be thus with him; he must die to-morrow.

The Japanese newspaper censorship has plagiarized the methods of Fate. It neither warns, nor explains, nor justifies; it simply strikes.

I do not mean that poetical prose has not always been written; it has not been so much written as prosaic poetry; but our language abounds in noble passages of it.

We have come to regard the conflict between a superior and an inferior civilization as having but one inevitable outcome. The lower race goes down before the higher. The occasional reverses which the British armies have met do not affect this position.

I hope you do not suppose that I had any disposition to complain of or to criticise American schools because American boys advance more slowly than European boys. It may be partly the fault of the schools; it certainly is partly the fault of the colleges; but I believe it is chiefly the fault of parents and of unfavorable conditions of American society.

We know not how to characterize, in any accordant and compatible terms, the Rome that lies before us; its sunless alleys, and streets of palaces; its churches, lined with the gorgeous marbles that were originally polished for the adornment of pagan temples; its thousands of evil smells, mixed up with fragrance of rich incense diffused from as many censers; its little life, deriving feeble nutriment from what has long been dead.

CHAPTER V.

THE PERIOD.

This mark of punctuation might be dismissed with a word, by saying that it is placed after every sentence which is not interrogative or exclamatory, after every abbreviated word, and after headings. On the other hand, many pages might be given, very profitably, to the consideration of the sentence alone which requires to be so punctuated. Although such study of the sentence properly comes within the province of rhetoric, a discussion of punctuation, as determined by the meaning of language, must be based primarily upon the sentence, because its proper structure cannot be ignored by the writer who attempts to reveal its parts, and their relations to each other, by use of marks.

The purpose of punctuation is not alone to make clear the sense of what somebody else has written, for such language may have no sense; but it is also to make certain that what one writes himself may be understood, may not be misunderstood, by others—to make certain that what the writer says on paper is what he conceives in the mind. In order to accomplish this end, a writer must understand sentence and paragraph structure, and reveal them to the reader. This knowledge need not be technical, or reduced to strict definition; but as its manifestation in his work is exact, so will be the clearness, the force, the beauty, of his language.

Whatever be a writer's conception of a sentence and a paragraph, and of sentence and paragraph unity, he should so punctuate his language as to make obvious the relations between words and groups of words, whether connectives be

used or not. If such relations be logical, or natural, relations, the meaning of the language will be, at least, unmistakable, and the unity of sentence and paragraph will not be in much danger of impairment.

Now, it is not claimed that the most accurate punctuation will make logical relations; but it will reveal to the writer illogical ones, and herein is to be found the greatest value of punctuation,—that is to say, its greatest value lies in its service to the writer, not to the reader, although the reader's debt to it is very great, inasmuch as he profits by the perfected form of the medium through which his information and his pleasure are derived.

The proper use of the comma, the semicolon, and the colon, often binds together clauses improperly separated by the period, and will, not less frequently, require the use of the period to divide into two or more sentences language loosely or improperly connected by all kinds of marks, the dash being most frequently used in such construction.

The next two examples furnish a good illustration of the improper use of the period, resulting in bad sentence structure. Of these examples, 100 is from the Review of Reviews, and 100-1 is from an essay of Macaulay as originally printed in the Edinburgh Review.

100. It is a cabinet [Salisbury's] which is as yet without a name. And, what is even stranger, without a nickname.

Here two brief adjective elements are separated by a period, when the use of the comma before the conjunction would be of doubtful propriety. The proper mode of punctuating such a sentence was discussed under 27-31, this sentence having its counterpart in 31.

100-1. Milton does not paint a finished picture, or play for a mere passive listener. He sketches, and leaves others to fill up the outline. He strikes the key-note, and expects his hearer to make out the melody.

Of these three sentences, the second clearly grows out of the first, it being an explanation and an expansion of one

part of such sentence. The third sentence is a like explanation and expansion of the second part of the first; and as it grows out of such sentence as naturally as does the second, such relation should be shown, as far as possible, if sentence unity is to be preserved. It may be shown here by uniting the second and third sentences into one. Thus:—

100-1-a. Milton does not paint a finished picture, or play for a mere passive listener. He sketches, and leaves others to fill up the outline; he strikes the key-note, and expects his hearers to make out the melody.

Sentence and paragraph unity depends on the writer's ability to confine himself to the subject of the one and to the topic of the other, in his sentence and paragraph building—in his composition. If he punctuates his language according to the sense, showing by proper marks and connectives the relations between words and groups of words, the length of the sentence will take care of itself, because he will have exhausted his marks before the sentence reaches an undesirable length.

It is said that the period is used to indicate an abbreviation, and to lead the eye over a blank space to the end of a line: as, H. W. Wood, A. M.; Commas..... p. 10. Strictly speaking, the mark so used is not a period at all, any more than an apostrophe is a comma; and this fact is recognized by printers, who give the name "leaders" to the periods used as a line of dots. In the absence of any other name for the dot that indicates an abbreviation, it must be called a period; but its office should not be confused with that of the period, especially when it comes between closely related parts of a sentence, as it does after letters and figures used to identify parts. This use of the period probably grew out of its appearance, which is less objectionable than that of any other mark in this place.

Some writers prefer a comma after letters and figures used to identify or particularize parts. In this work letters and figures so used are treated as sideheads when at the beginning of a line, and therefore take the period; but no mark

is used after them in the body of a line. This is seen in the numbering of sentences, and the frequent references to them.

It has long been customary to place the period after the Roman letters when used for numbers; as, Cor. ii., Richard IV., etc. It is contended, however, by many writers that there is no need for its use in such places, and they do not use it. It is not used after the numerals in 89-2, which is a quotation from a book printed at the U. S. Government printing office.

ERRONEOUS EXAMPLES.

Point out which marks are used in the following examples contrary to the reasons discussed in the preceding pages.

And now, my dear friend, a long, long adieu! One advice; and, as a parting one, consider, value it. Cultivate the milder dispositions of your heart. Subdue the more extravagant visions of the brain.

San Francisco was unique: all the color-lines were down; gilded vice, seated upon her tinsel throne, was visible from the pavement, and in some cases infamy might truly have been called splendid; the drone of the hurdy-gurdy, the gay fandango, the Celestial players of fantan, were heard and seen on every side; and all these Bret Harte, in the dew of his youth, saw, searched into, and assimilated.

It seems to me that Dr. Holmes had a nature singularly affectionate, and that it was this which was at fault if he gave somewhat too much of himself to the celebration of the Class of '29, and all the multitude of Boston occasions embalmed in the clear amber of his verse. If he were asked he could not deny many friendships and fellowships which united in the asking; the immediate reclame from these things was sweet to him; but he loved to comply as much as he loved to be praised.

A modern historian has observed that political changes seem to be governed, largely, by the principle of ebb and flow. For a time the tide runs all one way. Reform is in the air, and long-established abuses are overthrown. Then comes a reaction. It is felt that the nation has been going too fast and too far. No more reform must be undertaken for the present: there is danger in forgetting the old landmarks. Something of the same inconsistency may be observed in our estimate of literature, as the same principle works in literature itself.*

*In order to make two sentences of the sentences between "flow" and "Something," a comma and a conjunction ("for," "as," or the like) must take the place of the colon after "present."

CHAPTER VI.

BRACKETS, MARKS OF PARENTHESIS, DASH.

SECTION I.—BRACKETS.

Brackets are now used for practically only two purposes: to enclose, within quoted matter, a word or remark added by the writer using the quotation; to enclose matter of which a part is within marks of parenthesis. Thus:—

101. "And I humbly entreat you hereafter, [sic] let us know what we [are to] receive, and not stand to the sailor's courtesy to leave us what they please."

In this quotation from Captain John Smith's letter to the Royal Council of Virginia, sitting in London, the words "are to" are inserted to show the meaning of his language, by giving the usual and correct form of the verb. "Sic" is a Latin word meaning "so," "thus"; and it is used to call the reader's attention to what precedes it. In this instance it is to show the peculiar use of the comma, which is out of place, because it makes "hereafter" qualify what precedes it, while it belongs with what follows.

101-1. a—[b—(c—d)]

The brackets in the above algebraic expression show that all within them constitutes one quantity, and that it is to be subtracted from "a."

The Congressional Record uses brackets to enclose all matter that the editor or reporter inserts in speeches; but it is customary with newspapers to use marks of parenthesis to

enclose explanatory matter, such as names, the words "applause," "laughter," etc. In the following, where the Record would use brackets, newspapers would use marks of parenthesis:—

101-2. The senator [Davis] may condemn the measure, but I shall vote for it. [Applause.]

A single bracket is used to indicate stage directions in plays, when such directions come at the end of the line. Thus:—

101-3. Sweet, adieu. I'll keep my oath,
Patiently to bear my wroth.
[Exeunt Arragon and train.

The language within brackets is punctuated the same as if within marks of parenthesis.

SECTION II.—MARKS OF PARENTHESIS.

In addition to brackets, matter that is not an essential part of the composition is distinguished and set off by commas, dashes, and marks of parenthesis. At times it is somewhat difficult to decide which of these marks is the proper one to use, only the brackets having a well defined meaning. But a clear distinction between these marks generally exists, and there need be little hesitation about one's choice.

At the outset it is well to understand just why a writer introduces "matter that may be omitted without affecting the sense," as parenthetical matter is sometimes described. This characterization of parenthetical matter is a very erroneous one, except as it pertains to matter which never ought to be introduced, and yet may be inserted within marks of parenthesis without much distractive effect.

If a thought be suggested to a writer at a certain point in a sentence, it may be better to insert it at such point, although obviously out of its logical order, rather than to carry it beyond other thoughts, and then use it to modify or explain what has preceded the main thought of the sentence. In order thus to insert, out of its natural order, matter that

appears to have only a remote bearing upon the sentence, it is enclosed within marks of parenthesis, which characterize it as matter of this kind. A few examples will serve to illustrate the point.

102. Seizing his pen before breakfast (as if, as Bagehot says, any man could write poetry before breakfast!), Southey would go on for hours, turning out a good, sound, honest, perfectly business-like, and deadly dull article of poetry.

The absurdity of writing poetry before breakfast is suggested to the writer at a point in the sentence where it has no logical connection with the thought so far developed; but its incorporation into the sentence at this point will produce a much better effect than to hold it for the end of the sentence, and there use it as a commonplace inference from what has already been made plain. A comparison between the above and the following modified form of the same statement, will show how much more effective is the parenthetical than the logical statement.

102-1. Seizing his pen before breakfast, Southey would go on for hours turning out a good, sound, honest, perfectly business-like, and deadly dull article of poetry; for, as Bagehot says, no man can write poetry before breakfast.

It certainly requires nicety of judgment to determine, sometimes, what is sufficiently parenthetical to require marks of parenthesis in accordance with modern usage; for, it must be remembered, much matter now set off by commas was formerly considered parenthetical, and put within marks of parenthesis. This was particularly the case in the eighteenth century, the writings of which are still read. These marks are but little used in the Bible, except in the writings of Paul, where their principal use is to enclose complete sentences and paragraphs. In the following the marks are used in the common, but not in the revised, version; and it is safe to say that few writers would now use them in the same sentence.

102-2. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwell-

eth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.—Rom. vii. 18.

The revised version omits the marks of parenthesis, and uses a comma before "but," a slight change in language justifying the latter mark.

I should point the above as follows:—

102-2-a. For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not.

The use of the colon and the semicolon in 102-2 is by no means bad punctuation. The change to the semicolon and comma is made only because of the general tendency to use the smaller marks wherever possible.

102-3. There is always zest in complete expression, and zest (who does not know it?) is the one thing needful.

This sentence, as is commonly the case, loses much of its force by being taken from the paragraph, for what precedes it gives a meaning to the interrogative parenthetical expression, not otherwise apparent.

The slight difference in use between a group of words set off by marks of parenthesis and a group set off by commas, will be seen by comparing the two groups so set off in 102-3 and in the sentence following it,—the groups "who does not know it" and "as is commonly the case." The latter group is an adverbial element modifying, not "loses" simply, but "loses much of its force by being taken from the paragraph." If placed after the verb without marks, it would appear to modify the verb alone, which is not the case; if placed after "paragraph," it would appear in its true relation of an explanatory term, which it is where it stands. Therefore there are at least two good reasons for the use of the commas: the clause is both explanatory and parenthetical. The same would be true if it immediately followed the verb; but if it were put after "paragraph," it would be simply an explanatory term, and would require to be set off by

commas, the second comma, however, giving way to the semicolon.

The marks of parenthesis are used also to enclose a word or words that are purely explanatory, and which in some cases approach very nearly to the relation of apposition, the difference being simply in the purpose for which the explanatory word or words are introduced, the purpose determining whether the parenthetical relation exists. The three following examples will serve to elucidate the point:—

102-4. The requirements of that rather distinctive branch of work, literary journalism (using the term in its ideal significance), are far greater than those for the spasmodic production of special newspaper or magazine articles of the average quality.

102-5. That Child of so many prayers, who was to bear the significant name of John (Jehochanan), "the Lord is gracious," was to be the source of joy and gladness to a far wider circle than that of the family.

102-6. The Syracuse (New York) Journal asserts that the spoilsman must go.

In the first and second of the above examples, appositives appear side by side with parenthetical terms, the parenthetical term following the appositive in 102-4, and preceding it in 102-5. The distinction appears very obvious, and yet it is no easy matter to put it into exact language. It will be observed that, generally, purely parenthetical expressions, those set off by marks of parenthesis, have little or no grammatical connection with what precedes them; but there is a class of wholly parenthetical expressions that have the closest possible grammatical connection with the language, which class will soon be considered.

The quite common use of marks of parenthesis to enclose figures and letters required in the enumeration of particulars, is entirely unnecessary, if the figure or letter is used as a subcaption; but if the figures or letters are inserted between words not separated as in a subcaption, they require

the marks, agreeably to the reasons already given the punctuation of parenthetical matter. Thus:—

103. The following sentence contains three nouns: Do (1) good by (2) stealth, and blush to find it (3) fame.

But in the following the marks of parenthesis are not needed, their purpose being otherwise accomplished:—

103-1. There are three arguments in favor of this course: 1. It is necessary to save a friend. 2. It is profitable. 3. It is right.

PUNCTUATION OF THE LANGUAGE WITHIN BRACKETS AND MARKS OF PARENTHESIS.

Ordinarily, the use of brackets or marks of parenthesis has no effect upon the punctuation of the sentence in which either occur, and the sentence will be punctuated as if no such marks were used, except that these marks must not be separated by other punctuation from the part of the sentence to which they belong, as is done in 99-3 by the comma after "aloof." Such use of the comma in this sentence not only cuts the enclosed explanatory words off from what precedes, but it seems to make "on which" refer to the enclosed matter, which is never permissible, and cannot be here because of the sense, the previous comment having been on the quoted passage, or all that precedes the marks of parenthesis, and not on the likeness to Tennyson's style of expression. The comma, of course, belongs after the marks of parenthesis. All that follows the marks might be included within them by the use of the conjunction "and," which would show its meaning to be confined to the parenthetical matter.

Formerly, the custom was to use before the marks of parenthesis the punctuation required by the language outside of the marks, and to repeat this mark at the end of the enclosed matter. This mode of punctuation would require a comma after "aloof," and one after "Tennyson's." Such punctuation is so common in the older classical writers that it is well to remember it, so as not to ascribe the punctuation to error.

If the matter within the marks pertain to the paragraph

or to an entire sentence, rather than to a part of a sentence, it becomes an independent sentence, and is punctuated as such, its end mark remaining within the marks of parenthesis. This is well illustrated in the use of the word "applause" at the end of a sentence or paragraph. Thus:—

104. I nominate Mr. Smith as our candidate for president of this convention. (Applause.)

This punctuation shows that applause was caused, not by the utterance of a single word, but by what precedes, which may be a sentence, paragraph, or an entire speech. If it were stated in a report of a meeting that applause followed every mention of the name of Mr. Smith, the meaning might require a different punctuation from the above. Thus:—

104-1. Who is John Smith (applause)? He is a man of the people and for the people. In time of peace we found at the plow handle this same John Smith (applause); and I propose that in this great battle for principle we shall have for our leader this same John Smith (applause).

If the matter within the marks pertains to only a part of the sentence, it is punctuated as above, except that a period is not used to close it, and it does not begin with a capital letter; but if it is interrogative or exclamatory, it will take at the end the proper mark to show such character (see the parenthetical matter in 102 and 102-3). The sentence just written illustrates the punctuation under consideration.

It has already been said that much matter which we now set off by commas was formerly enclosed in marks of parenthesis; and therefore such matter was often in close grammatical connection with other parts of the sentence. Because of this connection it was pointed as if the marks of parenthesis were not used. A sentence from one of Paul's epistles will illustrate this mode of punctuation.

104-2. But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:)

Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring Christ again from the dead.)

This punctuation, though not to be commended, serves to illustrate the principle under discussion, as well as to show that general reasons underlie all these seeming inconsistencies.

The matter within brackets generally consists of only a few words; but if such matter requires punctuation, it will take it, agreeably to the above reasoning.

SECTION III.—THE DASH.

Utter confusion seems to exist, even among good writers, in the use of commas, dashes, and marks of parenthesis, for setting off parenthetical groups of words, and groups of words not parenthetical; and while one may not hope to bring much order out of this confusion, still some principles, which shall tend to uniformity, may be laid down.

The dash is an indispensable mark in many of its uses; and the writer who discards it, or abuses it, will often find much difficulty in making smooth the rough places in his language, however simple or lucid be his style of composition.

THE SINGLE DASH.

The single dash has two or three very definite uses, which need never be mistaken, and which serve, excellently, to point out to the reader the exact relations of the parts between which it stands.

The principal one of these uses is essentially that of the blank space at the beginning of the first line of a paragraph, which space identifies the paragraph as such. This space, called an indentation, indicates to the reader that there will follow a group of sentences (one sentence may constitute a paragraph) which have a common relation to the composition, --that is, they treat a subdivision of the composition, called a topic.

A similar space might take the place of the single dash; but as such space would come between words, it could not readily be distinguished from the ordinary and variable spacing, and therefore the dash is used, and it is used to group words just as sentences are grouped in the paragraph. The

necessity for such a mark may be illustrated by two or three sentences, in which the real meaning may or may not be plain, according to the information possessed by the reader.

105. The expenditure of this vast sum is entrusted to school officers, trustees, inspectors, and commissioners.

105-1. The rescue party was composed of non-commis sioned officers, lieutenants, captains, and majors.

105-2. The rescue party was composed of non-commissioned officers, corporals and sergeants.

It is no doubt true that many readers pass over all such sentences without getting their real meaning, while to readers who extract the sense from the meanings of words, the awkwardness of the construction is a source of annoyance. When neither the marks nor the words readily reveal the meaning of the language, an inexcusable obscurity results.

In 105 only three classes of men are named, all of whom are officers; in 105-1 four classes are named; and in 105-2 only two classes are named, corporals and sergeants being non-commissioned officers.

To indicate the relation, that of apposition, between a word and a group of words in two of these sentences, only two marks so far discussed can be considered; and they are the comma and the colon. The sentences show that the comma fails to accomplish the purpose. The colon would answer well enough; but this mark has been reserved for use in the formal enumeration of particulars, which formality is not apparent in these sentences. The comma would best serve the purpose if the other commas and the language did not suggest a series, which actually exists in 105-1. This difficulty may be obviated by the use of the dash, which will set the proper words off in a group. Thus:—

105-a. The expenditure of this vast sum is entrusted to school officers,—trustees, inspectors, and commissioners.

105-2-a. The rescue party was composed of non-commissioned officers,—corporals and sergeants.

105-1 is correct, as different classes are named by the different terms.

In the next sentence the group that needs to be distinguished precedes the general term.

105-3. One may get more comfort in the woods, though the snow, barred and netted by shadows, still lies deep in their shelter; for here may be found the sugar-maker's camp, with its mixed odors of pungent smoke and saccharine steam, its wide environment of dripping spouts and tinkling buckets, --signs that at last the pulse of the trees is stirred by a subtle promise of the returning spring.

In all of the above the comma indicates the apposition, and the dash serves to group the words standing as a whole in a common relation to another word. Likewise the dash is used before such terms as "that is," when they introduce a group of words explanatory, not of the word that precedes, but of all, or of a group of words, that precedes. The dash shows that the connection is thrown back beyond the apparent relation of the words. This point is well illustrated in the discussion of Sentence 93, in which the semicolon was made to perform the same office,—a mode of punctuation followed by many good writers, and one which is perfectly correct.

For a somewhat similar purpose, the dash is used before a word, or an expression containing a word, that summarizes preceding particulars, such word sustaining to what follows the same relation as the particulars would have sustained in its absence. The relation between this word and the particulars which it summarizes, is essentially one of apposition; but the purpose of the repetition is to make smooth what would otherwise be an abrupt connection. Thus:—

106. At the time of George Eliot's death, scarcely more was known about her than is known about Shakespeare. When she was born and where; how she was educated; what were the circumstances of her early life; how she discovered her vocation to literature; what was the character and per-

sonality of the woman as distinct from the artist,—these were questions about which hardly enough was known to furnish a basis for plausible conjecture.

The use of the comma after "artist" serves to mark the end of a long subject. In the absence of any subdivision of the parts of the subject, commas might take the place of the semicolons; but the use of the semicolon seems the better punctuation, since the relations of the parts are not so close as to suggest the smaller mark.

No other mark than the dash can serve the writer who breaks off in the midst of a sentence, and begins again, using the same words with which the sentence began, or equivalent words. He is aiming at rhetorical effect, and ignores grammatical relations.

107. He has been unkindly—he has been shamefully treated by his friends.

The dash is used also where the sentence is broken off, and the subject is changed; and if the language preceding the dash, when considered by itself, requires another mark after the last word, such mark will be used with the dash. Thus:—

107-1. Socrates, Plato,—what had your philosophy done for the world without the assurance of Christianity?

The use of the dash, above described as equivalent to a blank space, is well illustrated in a sentence intended to produce marked surprise, which it would not do without a significant pause at a point where the grammatical construction indicates no pause. Up to this point the language suggests a certain termination; and if the language is read aloud, the reader stops long enough to permit the listener to complete the apparent meaning of the sentence, and then the real meaning is given, which produces an effect obtained only by a comparison between this meaning and the apparent meaning. Thus:—

107-2. He never lacked a good word—from those who spoke his praise.

The single dash is used in many places which need no special consideration, the mere mention of them being sufficient. Some of them are the following:—

1. To indicate an omission of letters or figures: as, H——y, which stands for Henry; 1-6, which means 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6; 1895-96, which means 1895 and 1896.*

2. Between a title and the subject-matter, when they are in the same line. Thus:—

Discretion.—Be discreet in all things and so render it unnecessary to be mysterious about any.—Wellington.

3. Between matter quoted and the authority.

4. At the end of a line or after a word that introduces a paragraph beginning in the next line. This use of the mark is shown throughout this work after such words as "thus," "as," etc. It is violated in Sentence 99-3, no dash being used after "Mr. Spedding's" (near the end of the paragraph).

THE DOUBLE DASH.

It is the use of two dashes that is the most difficult to define, since there is, seemingly, nowhere any rule or reason discriminating between dashes and marks of parenthesis.

I offer the following general and somewhat indefinite direction, or rule, as embodying the result of my researches; and I offer it with the full knowledge that it is, at best, an uncertain guide.

General Direction.—Use two dashes to set off a parenthetical expression that is grammatically connected to, and coalescent with, the language in which it occurs, and is yet too strongly parenthetical for the use of commas.

In the consideration of this direction, it must be borne in

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*As the examples in this sentence require commas between their parts, semicolons are required between the examples, which punctuation calls for the colon before the introductory word, thus separating the particulars from what precedes by a larger mark than that which divides the particulars.

mind that parenthetical expressions have already been considered under the comma and marks of parenthesis, which are used in the punctuation of such expressions. Hence, it will be seen, the use of dashes to set off some parenthetical expressions divides such expressions into three classes,—those requiring commas, those set off by dashes, and those set off by marks of parenthesis.

If a group of words be added to sentence 105-a, it will be necessary to show their proper relation to what precedes them. The relation will suggest the proper mark, which is the dash. Thus:—

108. The expenditure of this vast sum of money is entrusted to a cumbersome body of school officers,—trustees, inspectors, and commissioners,—created by a jumble of laws, in which responsibility is divided hopelessly.

In order to show the relation of "created" to "body" or "body of school officers," a second dash is used, thus suspending the intermediate words as if set off by commas.

108-1. The image of the dull old town—which we had never seen—rose up alluringly before us.

The words here set off by dashes have the grammatical form of an explanatory adjective, which, agreeably to the principles laid down in Section VI. of Chapter I., requires to be set off by commas; yet the thing described by the adjective is not "town," but our ignorance of it. The matter is purely parenthetical, but has the grammatical relation of the adjective. It is a side remark, as it were, calling attention to the speaker, and not to the town; and therefore dashes are the proper marks to show this.

A slight change in the wording, and a comparison of the sentences will fully show these relations.

108-2. The image of the dull old town, which had never been seen by an Englishman, rose up alluringly before us.

Here we have a real description of the town by an adjective that is equivalent to "unseen-by-an-Englishman." This excites in the reader an interest in the town, and pre-

scnts a picture of it; but no such picture is suggested by the similarly formed words in 108-1, which is equivalent to "The image of the dull old town (we had never seen it) rose up alluringly before us."

108-3. He [an Italian official] cannot understand—nor can any of his leisurely countrymen—why next week or the week after will not answer the purpose just as well as this special afternoon.

Here is a side remark, a parenthetical expression in grammatical connection with the sentence; and it needs to be so characterized by punctuation. It is the relation of the matter introduced to the remainder of the sentence that determines whether commas or dashes are required; but in each case there must be a close grammatical relation, which does not exist when marks of parenthesis are used.

A greater degree of parenthesis is shown in the following, and it might seem that marks of parenthesis are required instead of the dashes; but the words set off sustain a relation to the other parts of the sentence that suggests the use of the latter marks.

108-4. George Eliot's heroines—her female characters from first to last—are drawn with the serene firmness of omniscience.

The next sentence is given in its original and incorrect form, and it shows what punctuation will do for a sentence, without a change in its form.

108-5. In their homes they spoke not of business; there the guest was received with a refined and gracious hospitality, but at the "store" they weighed out their groceries with the nicest precision, and in a transaction which involved a horse, they evinced a quick perception and a tricky shrewdness.

If this sentence ended at "hospitality," the colon would be the proper mark after "business," the sentence being similar to 90-1; but to punctuate the entire sentence in this manner would be to cut off, as it is now cut off by the semicolon,

the third clause from what it belongs to,—that is, the part of the sentence preceding the semicolon. The contrast is between the first—perhaps with its modifier the second—and third clauses, and not between the second and third, as the above punctuation makes it.

The addition of the third clause to the sentence does not change the relation of the first and second clauses, but it precludes the use of the colon, or even of the semicolon, after "business," by making the second clause an intermediate and parenthetical one, whose relation to the other parts of the sentence clearly calls for the dash. Therefore it should be punctuated as follows:—

108-5-a. In their homes they spoke not of business—there the guest was received with a refined and gracious hospitality; but at the "store" they weighed out, etc.

In the next sentence the semicolon is used in like manner; but a comma is required before the dash for reasons soon to be considered.

108-6. A few northern warblers were chirping in the evergreens along the edge of the summit, between the inn and the Point,—black-polls and bay-breasts, with black-throated greens and Carolina wrens; and near there I saw with pleasure my first Tennessee phoebes.

In 108-5 and 108-6 only a single dash occurs; but each sentence may be considered as one calling for two dashes, the second, however, giving way to, and being merged into, the semicolon, which is better punctuation than the use of a second dash, for the semicolon puts what follows it in contrast with all that precedes it,—that is, with the first clause as modified or explained by the second. Quite as good, or even better, punctuation of 108-5 would be a colon after "business," and a period after "hospitality."

MARKS WITH THE DASH.

Considerable diversity of usage will be found in the marks that accompany the dash. Some writers use no other mark

with it; but such punctuation is not to be commended, and is not followed by the best punctuators. Furthermore, this is the usage of writers who substitute the dash for other marks in so many places that the dash gives not the least notice to the reader of what is to follow, and therefore it becomes practically useless.

The mode of punctuating sentences in which the dash, used singly or doubly, occurs, as exhibited in the work of the most careful punctuators, may be summarized in a few words as follows:—

1. If a single dash is used, it is accompanied by whatever mark the language would require without the dash.

2. If two dashes constituting a pair are used, each dash is accompanied by a comma, or used alone, according to the relation of the matter that precedes the first dash to that which follows the second dash, as is shown in 108 and 108-3, respectively. If this relation calls for a mark greater than a comma, matter following the first member of the sentence loses its parenthetical relation to the two members, and is treated as belonging wholly to the first member. For example, the particulars following the dash in 108-6 are an integral part of the first member of the sentence, and are not a parenthetical intermediate group of words between what precedes and what follows, as are like particulars that come between the subject and the predicate of 108-4.

Whether the first dash is accompanied by a comma or not, a mark of interrogation or of exclamation will precede the second dash, if the parenthetical matter is interrogative or exclamatory.

The single dash may be repeated in a sentence one or more times; but in such cases no two of the dashes perform the office of a pair. In such a sentence, each dash may be accompanied by a semicolon; or a parenthetical expression requiring marks of parenthesis, may come between the groups of words separated by dashes, in which case a dash will precede, and one will follow, the marks of parenthesis.

The comma is used, agreeably to good usage, in 107-1 and in similar sentences where the language changes to take up a

question in another form, perhaps because the final comma marks the end of a series of words whose real relation to other words is not shown. The omission of the comma after "Plato" could hardly be criticised.

EXAMPLES.

Point out which marks are used in the following examples agreeably to the reasons discussed in the preceding pages.

Persecution, injustice, ruined fortune,—all, all seemed insignificant.

The editor of the Pioneer Press (Mr. Wheelock) was made chairman of the meeting.

Thirty days from date, I agree to pay John Smith One Hundred Dollars ($100.00).

At all events, some five hundred people—men, women, and children—were got together.

Here she passed the most unhappy years of her life,—disregarded, unhappy, and alone.

She walked away, a very straight, beautiful—yes, certainly beautiful—young figure, and disappeared.

The same note of character—the craftsman's keen delight in work—is struck in "Adam Bede" and in the little poem on Stradivarius.

Stevenson never lacks precsion, clearness, proportion,—the classic qualities; but, outside of them, the variety of his masters helped him to be various.

In England there is both private independence and public spirit, and both have at their back the two great powers of the land,—the law and public opinion.

Mr. Newman's syntax presents Homer's thought in a way which is something more than unconstrained,—over-familiar; something more than easy,—free and easy.

Jackson's conquests had been those of war,—always more dazzling than those of peace; his temperament was of fire,—always more attractivie than one of marble.

A young man or a young woman may go, unaided and unfriended, to a large city,—may go with nothing and to nothing,—and yet build up a beautiful and successful life.

Many years ago one of the great London auctioneers—either Christie or Sotheby, I forget which—asked him and old John Murray, the poet's publisher, to call at his office.

Now, if it were possible that you, Sir,—and the keen eyes [illegible] the young man closely,—could command the confidence of these dealers, you might make your visit profitable.

The spider springs for his mark, and is remarkably sure of [illegible] act which proves that for distances of several [illegible] the vision of hunting spiders is perfectly distinct and [illegible]

If you will take my advice, you will throw that letter into the fire. A bright one was blazing on the hearth.) If you keep it, it will probably tempt you into an outlay beyond your [illegible]

His voice and manner—the manner of the old Oxford school of the best type, and, alas! of a bygone generation, with its indescribable indication of cultured and lettered ease—were singularly attractive.

A thoroughly noble work—be it picture or poem, or statue or statesmanship—will inevitably win and compel recognition; but if the worker looked only to that end, he could not do what was worthy the end.

Bad weather has such wonderful activities,—at once creator and destroyer as it is,—from retouching with color the emerald of fern and moss and the turquoise of Alpine forget-me-nots to lashing the sea into tempest.

That the Plays of Shakespeare—or rather the Tragedies and Comedies, for the Histories are not now taken into account—are founded on Literary Forms is a proposition that will, at first glance, appear to many too improbable to be entitled to consideration.

But between Cowper and Homer—(Mr. Wright repeats in the main Mr. Cowper's manner, as Mr. Sotheby repeats Pope's manner, and neither Mr. Wright's translation nor Mr. Sotheby has, I must be forgiven for saying, any reason for existing)—between Cowper and Homer there is interposed the mist of Cowper's elaborate Miltonic manner.

Certain of the old problems that have come over from the immediate post-bellum period yet engage us,—let us hope, in their vanishing forms: such, for example, as the tariff,—whether we shall keep the rates of duty as they are, or keep them lower; and the currency,—whether we shall continue a forced-loan form of it, and thereby perpetually encourage inflation.

Even at noonday the air was full of music: first an incessant tinkle of cow-bells rising from all sides, wondrously sweet and soothing; then a continuous, far-away hum, like a saw-mill, just audible in the extreme distance, or the vibration of innumerable wires, miles remote, perhaps,—a noise which I knew neither how to describe nor how to guess the origin of, the work of seventeen-year locusts, I afterwards learned; and then, sung to this invariable instrumental accompaniment,—this natural pedal point, if I may so call it,—the song of birds.

CHAPTER VII.

MARKS OF INTERROGATION, EXCLAMATION, AND QUOTATION.

MARKS OF INTERROGATION.

The mark of interrogation is put at the end of every sentence asking a direct question, whether the sentence be interrogative or declarative in form. It is put also after every word or group of words which asks a question.

109. Is John going?

110. John is going?

111. Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why are thou disquieted within me?

It is often difficult to determine how to mark a succession of questions, which may have the form of mere phrases or of complete sentences. Except when special emphasis is to be placed upon each successive word or phrase, it is better to separate them by a comma or semicolon, and reserve the mark of interrogation for the end of the sentence. Generally, there will be at least a slight change in the form of the language, if the mark is to follow each part. Thus:—

111-1. Will you admit the territory of South Dakota? of North Dakota? of Montana? of Washington? and the territories of Idaho, Wyoming, Utah, New Mexico, Arizona, and Oklahoma?

This sentence represents the speaker stopping after each question, as if for answer; and the form of the question shows that special emphasis is placed upon each group of words,

particularly the first ones, by the pause after each. The list being too long for a pause after the name of each territory, the remaining names are grouped into one question by a slight change in the form of the grouping.

If each group of words constitutes by itself a complete sentence, though dependent upon an introductory word, the mark may still be repeated after the group, and the first word of the group will begin with a capital letter. An example of this punctuation is seen in the following sentence from page 17 of this work:—

111-2. The test, then, will always be. What does the language mean? What does the punctuation mark, if used, say to the reader?

Without the dependence above noted, each group of words would, of course, be treated as a complete sentence, taking the mark of interrogation, and having its first word begin with a capital letter. Thus:—

112. Does the rule fit the sentence? What does the language mean? What does the mark of punctuation say to the reader?

The mark of exclamation is similarly used, and may be placed at the end, or in the body, of a sentence, according to the meaning of the language. It is, however, a mark that should be sparingly employed, especially if one's language conveys the meaning without the mark.

113. When we pass from the living world to the dead, what a sad picture do we behold! Oh the grave! the grave!

MARKS OF QUOTATION.

Marks of quotation are used by a writer to show that the word or words enclosed by them are the language of another, or, as used in this book, to identify the language quoted with language preceding it. In the latter case the language quoted might be put in italics, but the too frequent use of italic letters mars the beauty of a page. Single words or short

phrases from foreign languages are generally put in italics, but longer quotations take the marks of quotation. The tendency is to dispense entirely with italics, as wholly useless; and the modern type machines, used by all the leading newspapers and in many printing offices where books are printed, do not make italic type.

Coming within a sentence, the marks serve to group the words included within them, thus making them practically independent, except as a whole, of the language that precedes or follows them; and any mark of punctuation within them has no reference to a mark without.

If the quoted language contains another quotation, the latter takes single quotation marks; and if a third quotation comes within the second, the first and second remain the same, and the third takes the double marks. If two or three of such quotations end together, the closing marks of each come in order; and thus we might have the closing marks of a double, a single, and a double quotation in succession, and so on quite indefinitely.

It was formerly the custom to repeat the marks at the beginning of every line, when the quotation was more than one line in length, using the closing marks only at the end of the quotation. It is now customary to repeat the marks at the beginning of every paragraph, when more than one paragraph constitutes the quotation. If the quoted matter has signatures attached, and they occupy separate lines (one being below another), the signatures are treated as separate paragraphs, and marks are placed before each, the final marks coming after the last signature, and not at the end of the last paragraph of the matter to which the signatures are attached.

It is very important that the marks of quotation include only the matter that is quoted, or if used to identify a group of words for a particular purpose, that this purpose shall be made obvious. An illustration of the latter point is seen in the following sentence, from "The School Review" (January, '96), a publication issued from The University of Chicago Press:—

114. This fundamental work might be called, "An Introduction to the Study of Literature"; or, "The Elements of Literature."

The punctuation of this sentence illustrates how easily one may forget a rule, or rather how one may misapply a rule. If the quotation marks within the sentence were omitted, the punctuation would be correct, following that of Sentence 99-8; but it would still be punctuation according to "rule," and not "reason," because the sense clearly shows that no such relation as is thus indicated exists between the two groups of words. The writer meant to say that the course of work might be called by either one title or the other, and his use of the quotation marks shows this; but apparently remembering the rule for the use of a semicolon and a comma in a compound book-title, those marks were retained, either by the writer or the printer.

If, perchance, the language was intended to name a single compound title, only the quotation marks before and after it would be required; but if alternative titles were intended, the punctuation should be as follows:—

114-a. This fundamental work might be called "An Introduction to the Study of Literature," or "The Elements of Literature."

The position of the closing marks of the quotation, when another mark is also required, is determined by good usage, which conforms to obvious reasons, except in the case of the comma and the period, whose position is determined by their appearance. If the entire sentence is quoted, the closing mark precedes the final marks of quotation, being thus included within the marks; but if only a word, or a part of the sentence, is quoted, the closing marks of the quotation will precede the other marks of punctuation, except it be a comma or a period, which marks come before the quotation marks, simply because they look better in this position. Illustrations of this punctuation will be found on almost every page of this work.

In order to avoid the too frequent use of quotation marks, they are omitted from the numbered examples in this book, such omission being justified by the fact that these examples stand apart from the other matter, and are manifest quotations.

EXAMPLES.

Like, but oh, how different!

Alas! What does man here below?

O mysterious night! Thou art not silent: many tongues hast thou.

Amusing,—good heavens! We shall none of us be amusing much longer.

His sole criterion in regard to any letter, as he tells us in his preface, has been, "Is it interesting? Is it readable?"

A philosopher being asked what was the first thing necessary to win the love of a woman, answered: "Opportunity."

As Wordsworth asks:—

" * * * the happiest mood
Of that man's mind, what can it be?"

Under such circumstances, even the

"Drowsy, frowsy poem called 'The Excursion,'
Writ in a manner which is my aversion,"

takes on a degree of interest.

CHAPTER VIII.

DISCUSSION

[illegible] purpose to discuss in this chapter apparent [illegible] punctuation, solely with a view to determin- [illegible] the correct mode of punctuating the sentence [illegible] but on the contrary the purpose is pri- [illegible] to exemplify principles already laid down, [illegible] developing the relation between the punctua- [illegible] sentence and the meaning of the language. This [illegible] by considering the punctuation and the lan- [illegible] the highest authorities for it little matters [illegible] the ignorant and the uncultured adopt, or [illegible] use any.

[illegible] sentence apparently follows in its punc- [illegible] principle laid down on page [illegible] the parentheti- [illegible] set off by dashes being in direct grammatical con- [illegible] with what precedes it:—

[illegible] The quarrel [in painting, sculpture, and architec- [illegible] between symbolists, impressionists, idealists,—or what- [illegible] may for the moment have been in favor,—and [illegible] was quite overshadowed by the fierceness of the con- [illegible] raged between precisely the same principles in the [illegible] fiction.

[illegible] obvious fault with the above punctuation is, that [illegible] are used to set off a group of words which is not at [illegible] parenthetical, and that the matter set off by the dashes [illegible] be omitted without detracting from the meaning of [illegible] language [illegible] without leaving the remainder of the sen-

tence in utter grammatical confusion. The assertion is here made that the artists constituting one party to the quarrel have been known by, at least, four names, three of which (symbolists, impresssionists, idealists) are definitely named, and the other indefinitely (whatever name, etc.); and therefore the fourth name is as essential to the series and the sense as the other names, and should not be thus cut off by dashes.

If the "or" be put before "idealists," and "whatever" be changed to "whichever," the punctuation will be correct, and the sense obvious; but the meaning of the language will be changed. If the "or" be omitted, the language will not necessarily assert, but it will imply, that other names than the three specified, have been given these artists. Perhaps the meaning of the language, with such change, could not be mistaken; but the omission of the final "or" from a series hardly has the authority of good usage, for "and" is generally understood when no conjunction is expressed, as, for example, in Sentence 6.

The changes suggested will give the following:—

115-1. The quarrel between symbolists, impressionists, or idealists,—whichever name may for the moment have been in favor,—and realists was quite overshadowed, etc.

115-2. The quarrel between symbolists, impressionists, idealists,—whatever name may for the moment have been in favor,—and realists was quite overshadowed, etc.

In 115-1 the use of "whichever" confines the meaning of the parenthetical expression to what has preceded; and its omission, with "or" in the series, will not affect the meaning of the sentence, or require a change in the grammatical construction of what is left,—essential features of a parenthetical expression.

The omission of the parenthetical expression in 115-2 will leave a series of words without a final conjunction, and requiring "or" to make sense, although "or" is never so understood.

The use of the dashes, therefore, in the original sentence is error; and their omission will give the author's meaning and make the punctuation correct.

It has been truly said that good English is not always logical; nevertheless if one would have his language conform to the canons of good usage, and would always have its meaning unmistakable, he must avoid some forms of construction that are excellent in themselves, but bad, if the meaning, apart from the form of construction, is not unmistakable. This is especially true in the use of restrictive and explanatory terms. Mr. Wilson says (p. 58, d): "When the antecedent consists of nouns or phrases between which commas are required, a comma should be inserted before the relative clause, though restrictive; as,—

[116.] "There are many dreams, fictions, or theories, which men substitute for truth."

Such refinement of rule is not based upon good reasoning or upon the logic of language; and that this is true, another quotation from Mr. Wilson will prove. On page 37, he says: "When 'and,' 'or,' or 'nor' occurs [in a series], the comma is unnecessary after the last noun, because the conjunction shows that all the particulars have, either separately or together, a relation to what follows in the sentence; as,—

[117.] "The good man is alive to all the sympathies, the sanctities, and the loves of social existence."

"Separately" means connected by "or"; "together," connected by "and." In 116 the nouns are connected by "or," in 117 by "and"; and in each sentence they are followed by an adjective, whose difference in form has no effect whatever upon the punctuation. If no comma be required after "loves," none would be required before the same adjective in the pronominal form, "which pertain to social existence." For the same reason no comma is required before "which men substitute for truth." The punctuation of such a group of words should follow the principles laid down in Section VI. of Chapter I. In the above sentences both adjectives ar restrictive, and neither requires the comma before it.

The above rules are followed by nearly all school text-book writers, many of them appropriating the rules, word for word, and the examples of Mr. Wilson.

Where there are only two nouns or phrases to which the adjective may apply, the comma serves to confine the adjective to the latter if the meaning of the language requires it, as shown in Chapter IV.; and it is also shown in that chapter how the modifier may be confined to the last word of a series.

No doubt many good writers do not observe these requirements of punctuation; but good writers avoid the use of obscure language, and language capable of two constructions. Therefore it may be said that words in a series containing a final conjunction should not be followed by a modifier, whatever its form, unless the meaning is unmistakable. It may apply to all of the nouns in the series, or to only the last one; and it may or may not take the comma before it. Under no circumstances, however, should its relation to one or all of the nouns depend upon the punctuation, which should be left to show whether the modifier is restrictive or explanatory.

The contrast between rule and reason in the use of marks is well exemplified in the punctuation of a so-called parenthetical clause following a conjunction, such as "but," "if," "and," or the like. Mr. Wilson's rule is to omit the comma if the clause itself contains a comma; and Mr. Bigelow's rule requires its omission always, although he uses it, contrary to his own rule, in a sentence in his sample proof-sheet, in a place where even Mr. Wilson would not use it.

I do not agree with Mr. Wilson's or Mr. Bigelow's rule, or with Mr. Bigelow's practice in the sentence referred to.

The consideration of a few sentences will fully elucidate the point. The following sentence is from Mr. Bigelow's proof-sheet; and the same plate appears in the appendix to Worcester's Dictionary, p. 1775:—

118. Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue; but, if you mouth it, as many of our players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines.

The next two sentences are from page 312 of Mr. Wilson's work.

119. If the author be a thoughtful man, he will take care that no unnecessary delay occur in the performance of his duty; for, though it may possibly be a matter of little importance to the public or himself when his book will make its appearance, it is the utmost moment to the printer and his workmen that their material be not blocked up, or their time frittered away.

120. Indeed, to ensure the highest degree of correctness, he should have both objects in view; for even if the writer have genius or great learning, and the printer be a man of talent and taste, it is not to be supposed, that these qualities, so desirable in authorship and typography, will have made either of them immaculate.

Why the comma after "but" in 118, and after "for" in 119? and why none after "for" in 120?

The construction certainly presents difficulties, which cannot be removed by a hard and fast rule; but they give way, in a measure, to a mode of punctuation whose aim is to produce the least distractive effect in reading.

An examination of the above sentences and of those to follow will show that the conjunction requires the reader to consider the relation existing between two members of a sentence, one of which is so complex as to lead to, at least momentary, distraction, which it is the office of the punctuator, by the use or absence of marks, to lessen. Take, for example, the first of the above sentences in a simplified form, and analyze the mental process necessary to obtain its meaning:—

"Speak the speech trippingly on the tongue; but, if you mouth it, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines."

Grammatically speaking, "if you mouth it" is subordinate to what follows, and, besides, it is a transposed part of the sentence, its logical position being after the main clause. It also appears to be, in its present position, an intermediate element. This gives apparently strong reasons for setting it

off with commas, as is done above; but the sense relation of the language gives stronger reasons for the omission of the comma after "but," agreeably to the rule of Mr. Bigelow and the practice of Mr. Wilson, as such rule and practice pertain to the simplified sentence.

If the group of words following "but" be set off by commas, the reader's attention will be centered on a contrast between the first and third clauses, because the thought of the intermediate clause has been suspended by the commas. But, obviously, the contrast is not between such thoughts, it being between all that precedes, and all that follows, the conjunction. This group, if set off by commas, would suggest the relation exhibited in Sentence 34; but there is a great difference between the two, the words set off by commas in the latter being purely parenthetical, while the words under consideration in the former are essential to the sense.

The argument, then, is, that "but" does not show a contrast between the first and third clauses, to which the reader's attention is to be called by suppressing, with commas, an intermediate expression; but, on the contrary, the contrast is between the two members of the sentence, and the thought of the subordinate clause in the second member is necessarily presented before that of the principal one. In other words, the cue to the principal clause in the second member is taken from the subordinate clause; and therefore the latter should not be suspended by commas, for such punctuation tends to make the co-ordination between the wrong thoughts. This was shown in Sentences 34-35. In the absence of the comma after the conjunction, the contrast is indicated as being between the members as wholes.

In 119 the clause set off by commas has little or no effect upon what follows; and as it may be even omitted without affecting the sense, it is properly set off by commas.

In 120 Mr. Wilson uses no comma after "for." His practice, though no rule for the punctuation is given, is to use a comma in such a place if the transposed clause is itself subdivided by a comma or commas. I should omit the comma after "learning," and still use none after "for," omitting the

former because "and" connects the parts of an intermediate group of words similarly formed, and introduced by the same word ("the"), which gives ample notice of their relation. I should use no comma before "for," because the thought in the group of words following it contains the cue to the thought in the principal clause. I should omit the comma after "supposed," because neither the grammatical nor the sense relation requires it.

If 119 ended at "workmen," it would be practically the counterpart of 120, requiring the omission of the comma after "for"; but as what follows "workmen" makes the clause complete in itself, and as the clause preceding does not give the cue to what follows, the commas are properly used.

The omission of a comma after "but" in the sentence just written exemplifies the principle.

The relation between clauses, as wholes, is well shown in the following sentence:—

120-1. If the gentlemen represent in these principles the government which appointed them, and if that government represents in these things the people of the United States, then civilized society is an anachronism.

Except for the length of the clauses in the above, beginning with "if" and connected by "and," the comma between them might be omitted; and it would better be omitted if the two clauses formed an intermediate term.

The relation between the clauses, in such sentences as have just been considered, is none the less close because the second clause consists of principal and subordinate parts which have been inverted.

It is interesting to note some of the various modes of punctuation adopted by good writers to overcome a difficulty similar to that discussed in connection with Sentences 27 to 32, inclusive, which require, however, a different punctuation.

121. But of all these portraits, the most self-revealing, the real man, as we think, is given in the frontispiece.

121-1. Coleridge's exquisite musical diction, "the magical use of words," as it has been called, gives to his poetry a certain divine appeal which slides into the soul.

121-2. If Coleridge had been willing—or able, perhaps we should say—to work regularly even a few hours a day, there would have been no lack of an adequate income.

121-3. The principal, or (as Blair calls them) the capital, words in a sentence should be "so placed as to stand clear and disentangled from any other words that would clog them."

121-4. Though not carrying his preference for the inverted (or, as he calls it, the direct) style to such lengths as Bentham did, Herbert Spencer pushes the theory very far.

Three of these sentences are taken from an article in the Atlantic Monthly (September, 1895), and two from Prof. Hill's Principles of Rhetoric (pp. 141 and 148).

Let us first ascertain the meaning of the language, and what end is sought by the punctuation.

In 121 "the real man" is simply a stronger characterization of the most self-revealing"; and the modifier that follows belongs to the second group of words, which embodies the first. Under no view of the relation of these two groups of words, can the meaning of the modifier be confined to one group to the exclusion of the other; but in 121-1, formed almost identically like 121, the meaning of the language shows that the modifier is confined to one group to the exclusion of the other. Likewise in 121-2, in which the use of "or" does not materially, if at all, change the relations of the groups, the meaning of the modifier is confined to one group. An obvious error in 121-3 is the position of the marks of parenthesis, which should always be placed next to the word or words explained, as they are used in 121-4.

Having determined the end to be accomplished by the marks, we may now ask what marks to use.

The relation of the groups of words in 121 shows its punctuation to be in accordance with principles laid down in this work. While the meaning of 121-1, as punctuated, is unmistakable, the second group of words, with its modifier, is clear-

ly parenthetical, as is the similar group in 121-2; and its close grammatical relation to what precedes suggests the dashes, which are properly used in 121-2.

Sentence 121-3 has its counterpart in 30, and its punctuation shown in 30-a. The use of the marks of parenthesis in 121-4 is not open to objection; but such use does not conform to the style we have adopted.

The suggested changes will make the sentences read as follows:—

121-1-a. Coleridge's exquisite musical diction—"the magical use of words," as it has been called—gives to his poetry a certain divine appeal, which slides into the soul.

121-3-a. The principal, or, as Blair calls them, the capital, words in a sentence should be so placed as to stand clear and disentangled from any other words that would clog them.

121-4-a. Though not carrying his preference for the inverted, or, as he calls it, the direct, style, etc.

Note.— The word "certain," in 121-1, seems to make the adjective (relative clause) following "appeal" an explanatory, rather than a restrictive, adjective; and to show this fact, the comma is inserted in 121-1-a before "which."

A point that is difficult to solve presents itself in the punctuation of certain adverbs, particularly "first," "second," and the like; and the difficulty is increased by the necessity of a different punctuation in sentences with so slight change in the shade of meaning that the difference is not very plain, and is not based wholly upon usage. The sentences to follow will readily discover the point.

125. This twofold relation of the individual, first, to his parents, and second, to his circumstances, is not peculiar to human beings.

But before taking up the point referred to, we will consider another point raised by the punctuation of this sentence.

The omission of the comma before "and" in such a sentence as the above, is so common as to give this mode of punctua-

tion a certain degree of authority; but it is contrary to the reasons set forth in this work. If the sentence, in its present and in a simplified form, be written without the adverbs, the relation of the adverbs to other parts of the sentence will be more obvious. Thus:—

125-1. This twofold relation of the individual, to his parents and to his circumstances, is not peculiar to human beings.

125-2. The individual's relation to his parents and to his circumstances is not peculiar to human beings.

The group of words beginning with "to" and ending with "circumstances," is made explanatory in 125-1 by the presence of the word "this"; but it is restrictive in 125-2, and therefore takes no comma before or after it. If the adverb "first" be inserted after "relation" in 125-2, it will be a purely parenthetical word, which many old style punctuators would enclose in marks of parenthesis, as exemplified in 103; but which we now set off by commas, for reasons already explained. If "first" requires marks of parenthesis or commas, how can "second" possibly be inserted without them? The same is true of 125-1, the presence of the comma after "individual" in nowise affecting the relation of the inserted word to what precedes it. The punctuation in 125 makes "and" connect "first" and "second," according to the principle exemplified in 17. If "first" and "second" be construed as adjectives, each requiring the word "relation" to be repeated, and to be construed as in apposition with the subject of the sentence, then the punctuation of 125 is correct; but who will contend that such are the relations of the word?

The parenthetical nature of "first" and "second" may be shown by a substitution, which will but slightly change the meaning, while leaving no doubt as to the punctuation required, thus:—

125-3. This twofold relation of the individual, (1) to his parents and (2) to his circumstances, is not peculiar to human beings.

All punctuators follow one or the other of the above modes of punctuation; and, it may safely be said, all modern punctuators would use marks as given in the next sentence, although such use apparently violates the principle exemplified in the above.

126. First be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

I think the reason for the omission of commas after "first," and before and after "then," is to be found in the nature of the language. In this use, and in similar uses, such words have lost, in a certain measure, the idea of order, which would put them, as here used, in strong contrast with each other. Through this loss of order they have become less parenthetical than the similar words in 125, as is shown by the fact that they cannot be omitted without affecting the sense. As the words no longer possess the parenthetical nature, the commas are properly omitted.

Note.—The omission of marks at the ends of the lines of a title-page or any "displayed" matter, is a printer's device to improve the appearance of such lines, the marks tending to destroy their symmetry; and the device is so successful that it is now quite generally followed. It is followed in the punctuation of the title-page of this book.

MISCELLANEOUS EXAMPLES.

In the following examples, selected from the writings of authors of established literary reputation, there will be found some punctuation that fails to preserve the continuity of thought, and some that does not reveal the probable meaning of the author; and yet there will not be found here a single example whose punctuation is not of common occurrence in such writings.

The punctuation of every sentence here given is contrary to some principle exemplified in the preceding pages,

Think not ambition wise, because 'tis brave.

After paying expenses and losses, if any, the balance shall be returned to the donors.

He caught the humor of the place, its moods, frettings, prejudices, and slyly laughed at them.

Honors for himself, an earldom, the garter, honors for his friends, all these things were nothing.

About four thousand examples have been selected, arranged, and tested in the recitation-room.

He was a prolific, modest and miscellaneous writer, with a connection among authors and publishers.

Let the pupil present to his teacher those trials of his skill, to be examined and approved or corrected.

He was proof against whatever did not fall in with his habits of thought and standards of judgment.

It was this willingness, this courage, if it may be so termed, which gave to him not a little of his prestige.

The scene outside, the leaden sky and grey moon and falling rain, had reduced the boy to the depth of misery.

He wants to obtain a position of some kind, a subordinate one preferred, because he does not like responsibility.

Our great battle-ships carry no sails—the power is steam and the ship is full of machinery—steam and electrical.

He says that the new grammar should recognize the true nature of the sentence or proposition as consisting of three parts.

The attorney and the public believe the court is divided, and, if two opinions are not expressed, everybody will be surprised.

Music is emotion; its conception, its working out, demand concentration not of the intellect alone, but of the very forces of the soul.

He was remembered as a man of rare worth of character, and during his life his reputation for probity and trustworthiness was almost proverbial.

I cannot close without expressing my gratification at this enlargement of your functions and my confidence that the new franchise will be exercised in a spirit of loyalty.

The fair creatures then sat down on a row of chairs placed round the walls, and, each making a table of her knees, began eating her sweet but sad and sulky repast.

Eaton, at any rate, teaches her aristocratic pupils virtues which are among the best virtues of an aristocracy,—freedom from affectation, manliness, a high spirit, simplicity.

It was as if she had stepped from her frame, to stand in the sunset radiance, more young, more fresh, more fair than when Velasquez painted her three centuries gone by.

In order to be thus protected, the communications must have been made to the counsel, attorney, or solicitor, acting, for the time being, in the character of legal adviser.

There is, however, a peculiar difficulty in using this proof; it requires the writer to assume, very impertinently, that nothing is natural but what he has seen or supposes to exist.

The Palace of Holyrood is a house of many memories. Great people of yore, kings and queens, buffoons and grave embassadors, played their stately farce for centuries in Holyrood.

Nobility of birth does not always insure a corresponding nobility of mind; if it did, it would always act as a stimulus to noble actions; but it sometimes acts as a clog rather than a spur.

The census report on farm ownership and cultivation recently published, shows a noteworthy increase in the number of farms and decrease in their average size throughout the South.

In all the political talk which I heard, and at the time I was in England everybody was talking politics, I should say that there was an even keener partisanship shown than in this country.

Give people knowledge, give them better education, and thus crime will be abated—drunkenness, improvidence, lawlessness, and all the powers of evil, will, to a certain extent, disappear.

One little note from Murray to Byron, brief but significant in the blended frankness and deference of its tone, I lighted on lately imbedded in the correspondence of Mrs. Leigh, Byron's sister.

The vote said as clearly as if it had been written out in black and white, that these political wretches must be got rid of as promptly as may be, and not in detail, but wholesale, at one fell swoop.

A supposed infidelity in the tone of Dr. Holmes' story "The Guardian Angel" cost the Atlantic Monthly many subscribers. Now, the tone of the story would not be thought even mildly agnostic, I fancy.

A promissory note or a note of hand, as it is often called, is an open promise in writing by one person to pay another person therein named, or to his order, or to bearer, a specified sum of money absolutely and at all events.

It is a book of a thousand,--the product of living as well as thinking; and destined, one dares to hope, to be for many a guide out of the world of apparently discordant dualisms into the serene peace and harmony of a real unity.

They were men in the humblest order of life, having come to meet our boat in the hope of earning somethng by carrying our luggage up to the city, but poor though they were, it was plain that they were Turks of the proud old school.

Told in this form, the story points to British aggression at the outset; but, even if it be quite different, and even if the instructions from Caracas for the release indicate a wrongful arrest, what ground is there for an arbitrary arrest?

It was said by the irreverent students that if a man were a peer, a profligate, or a pauper Jowett would be sure to take him up; and one sees now the reasons that underlay such a method of selection; the physician applying himself to those that were sick.

This state of affairs gave me an idea which I expressed at Cairo; that the government ought to disband the regular army, with the exception of the staff corps, and notify the disbanded officers that they would receive no compensation while the war lasted except as volunteers.

The negro has no specific names for his ghosts, preferring to describe them by a circumlocution, but he is punctilious in assigning them to appropriate localities; or perhaps it would be better to say particular localities, for in many cases the appropriateness is hardly discoverable.

The questions which he was wont to deal with so fondly, so wisely, the great problems of the soul, were all the more vital, perhaps, because the personal concern in them was increased by the translation to some other being of the men who had so often tried with him to fathom them here.

At boarding-school George Eliot was not especially noted as a writer, but so uncommon was her intellectual power, that we all thought her capable of any effort; and so great

was the charm of her conversation, that there was continual strife among the girls as to which of them should walk with her.

Conscious, apparently, of their own want of skill and experience in the matter of judging sculpture, they very properly asked four leading American sculptors—J. Q. A. Ward, Augustus St. Gaudens, Olin L. Warner, D. C. French, and a prominent architect, Bruce Price—to aid them in making a selection.

If a moralist or a metaphysician—or say, a philosopher combining both in one—wished to illustrate his rules of conduct or his laws of mind, in other words, his moral or mental science by examples drawn from real life, he would be obliged to ransack histories, memoirs, and other records of human action for cases in point.

These specimens of a most unfortunate class of people were shipwrecked crews in quest of bed, board, and clothing, invalids asking permits for the hospital, bruised and bloody wretches complaining of ill-treatment by their officers, drunkards, desperadoes, vagabonds, and cheats, perplexingly intermingled with an uncertain proportion of reasonably honest men.

If, as all science teachers contend, laboratory work is indispensable for teaching science; if, beside being told a fact, the pupil must see it for himself in order to remember it,—if it is necessary for a student to make himself master of the truths of science, which are only a part of his mental equipment, how much more essential is laboratory work in language, which is a tool he can never lay aside!

When the Indian has land, law, labor, learning—the four fingers, and love—the thumb, he has the complete self-helping hand, and is prepared, like any other human being, to take his place as a citizen, as an individual, as a man, standing upon his own feet, using his own powers, defending his own hearth-stone, educating his own children, and carving for himself a place among his fellowmen.

The vast mass of the world's debt was incurred "not to promote the ends of peace, not to develop agriculture or the mechanic arts, not to improve harbors and the navigation of rivers, not to found institutions of learning, or of charity, or of mercy, not to elevate the standard of culture among the masses, not for any or all of these laudable objects, but for the waste, the cruelty, the untold agonies of war."

Of course we shall have further need for parties; and whether we need them or not, neither one of them is going really to suffer obliteration; but before another absorbing party conflict comes, that party which is wise enough to use the present opportunity to magnify and strengthen the execu-

tive office and to further administrative reforms will have not only a tactical, but also a prodgious moral advantage.

I ask two thousand five hundred guineas for it (fourth Canto of Child Harold), which you will either give or not as you think proper * * * * * If Mr. Eustace was to have two thousand for a poem on Education; if Mr. Moore is to have three thousand for Lalla; if Mr. Campbell is to have three thousand for his prose or poetry—I don't mean to disparage these gentlemen or their labors—but I ask the aforesaid price for mine.

Horace is a perfect type of that urbanitas which the Romans claimed as one of their distinguishing qualities; and as a great and beautiful city surely draws to her the observant and thoughtful souls from every district, and if she does not keep them, sends them home refined and transmuted, so Horace exercises upon thousands of men the mystic influence of the Eternal City, in a way that more passionate, loftier, and deeper poets, Catullus, Virgil, and Lucretius, fail to do.

In prose the character of the vehicle for the composer's thoughts is not determined beforehand; every composer has to make his own vehicle; and who has done this more admirably than the great prose-writers of France,—Pascal, Bossuet, Fenelon, Voltaire? But in verse the composer has (with comparatively narrow liberty of modification) to accept his vehicle readymade; it is therefore of vital importance to him that he should find a vehicle adequate to convey the highest matters of poetry.

AN EXERCISE.

The following extract from an article, by Rowland E. Robinson, in the Atlantic Monthly for December, 1895, furnishes an example of good paragraphing, and, with two or three exceptions, of good puntuation, especially of the judicious omission of marks.

A New England Woodpile.

When the charitable mantle of the snow has covered the ugliness of the earth, as one looks towards the woodlands he may see a distant dark speck emerge from the blue shadow of the woods and crawl slowly houseward. If born to the customs of this wintry land, he may guess at once what it is; if not, speculation, after a little, gives way to certainty, when the indistinct atom grows into a team of quick-stepping horses or deliberate oxen hauling a sled-load of wood to the farm-house.

It is more than that. It is a part of the woods themselves, with much of their wildness clinging to it, and with records, slight and fragmentary, yet legible, of the lives of trees and birds and beasts and men, coming to our door.

Before the sounds of the creaking sled and the answering creak of the snow are heard, one sees the regular puffs of the team's breath jetting out and climbing the cold air. The head and shoulders of the muffled driver then appear, as he sticks by narrow foothold to the hinder part of his sled, or trots behind it beating his breast with his numb hands. Prone like a crawling band of scouts, endwise like battering-rams, not upright, with green banners waving, Birnam wood comes to Dunsinane to fight King Frost.

As the woodpile grows at the farm-house door in a huge windrow of sled-length wood or an even wall of cord wood, so in the woods there widens a patch of uninterrupted daylight. Deep shade and barred and netted shadow turn to almost even whiteness, as the axe saps the foundation of summer homes of birds and the winter fastnesses of the squirrels and raccoons. Here are the tracks of sled and team, where they wound among rocks and stumps and over cradle knolls to make up a load; and there are those of the chopper by the stump where he stood to fell the tree, and along the great trough made by its fall. The snow is flecked with chips, dark or pale according to their kind, just as they alighted from their short flight, bark up or down or barkless or edgewise, and with dry twigs and torn scraps of scattered moss.

When the chopper comes to his work in the morning, he finds traces of nightly visitors to his white island that have drifted to its shores out of the gray sea of woods. Here is the print of the hare's furry foot where he came to nibble the twigs of poplar and birch that yesterday were switching the clouds, but have fallen, manna-like, from skyward to feed him. A fox has skirted its shadowy margin, then ventured to explore it, and in a thawy night a raccoon has waddled across it.

The woodman is apt to kindle a fire more for company than warmth, though he sits by it to eat his cold dinner, casting the crumbs to the chickadees, that come fearlessly about him at all times. Blazing or smouldering by turns, as it is fed or starved, the fire humanizes the woods more than the man does. Now and then it draws to it a visitor, oftenest a fox-hunter who has lost his hound, and stops for a moment to light his pipe at the embers and to ask if his dog has been seen or heard. Then he wades off through the snow, and is presently swallowed out of sight by gray trees and blue shadows. Or the hound comes in search of his master or a lost trail. He halts for an instant, with a wistful look on his sorrowful face, then disappears, nosing his way into the maw of the woods.

If the wood is cut "sled length," which is a saving of time and also of chips, that will now be made at the door and will serve to boil the tea-kettle in summer, instead of rotting to slow fertilization of the woodlot, the chopper is one of the regular farm hands or a "day man," and helps load the sled when it comes. If the wood is four foot, he is a professional, chopping by the cord, and not likely to pile his cords too high

or long, nor so closely that the squirrels have much more trouble in making their way through them than over them; and the man comes and goes according to his ambition to earn money.

In whichever capacity the chopper plies his axe, he is pretty sure to bring no sentimentalism to his task. He inherits the feeling that was held by the old pioneers toward trees, who looked upon the noblest of them as only giant weeds, encumbering the ground, and best got rid of by the shortest means. To him the tree is a foe worthy of no respect or mercy, and he feels the triumph of a savage conqueror when it comes crashing down and he mounts the prostrate trunk to dismember it; the more year-marks encircling its heart, the greater his victory. To his ears, its many tongues tell nothing, or preach only heresy. Away with the old tree to the flames! To give him his due, he is a skillful executioner, and will compel a tree to fall across any selected stump within its length. If one could forget the tree, it is a pretty sight to watch the easy swing of the axe, and see how unerringly every blow goes to its mark, knocking out chips of a span's breadth. It does not look difficult nor like work; but could you strike "twice in a place," or in half a day bring down a tree twice as thick as your body? The wise farmer cuts, for fuel, only the dead and decaying trees in his woodlot, leaving saplings and thrifty old trees to "stand up and grow better," as the Yankee saying is.

There is a prosperous and hospitable look in a great woodpile at a farmhouse door. Logs with the moss of a hundred years on them, breathing the odors of the woods, have come to warm the inmates and all in-comers. The white smoke of these chimneys is spicy with the smell of seasoned hard wood, and has a savor of roasts and stews that makes one hungry. If you take the back track on a trail of pitchy smoke, it is sure to lead you to a squalid threshold with its starved heap of pine roots and half-decayed wood. Thrown down carelessly beside it is a dull axe, wielded as need requires with spiteful awkwardness by a slatternly woman, or laboriously upheaved and let fall with uncertain stroke by a small boy.

CHAPTER IX.

BUSINESS LETTER-WRITING.

I have been requested to add to this work a chapter on business letter-writing, because of the importance of the subject to many persons, especially stenographers, who are also interested in punctuation. I comply somewhat reluctantly, as the matter is rather foreign to the subject of this book, but with the hope that the importance of the little I have to say may justify the space given to it.

To be able to write a good letter is a choice accomphishment; and to be able to transcribe a dictated letter, putting it into neat and proper form, is a valuable one.

Not a few stenographers are unable properly to address an envelope, and many more cannot neatly arrange upon a sheet of letter paper matter of which every word has been dictated, and every capital letter, paragraph, and mark of punctuation indicated. On the other hand, a competent observer has recently affirmed that the average business letter sent out by some firms, will compare favorably, in neatness and verbal accuracy, with the communications received by the editor of any first-class journal.

The suggestions which I shall make, and the errors to which I shall call attention, are few in number.

THE ENVELOPE.

An envelope is neatly addressed when the lines of which the address is composed are symmetrically arranged. It is properly addressed only when the arrangement and use of words upon the envelope are such as to preclude, as far as possible, liability to delay or mistake in the letter's delivery.

A symmetrical arrangement of an address consisting of,

say, three lines, the name line being considerably longer than the other lines, is the following: the name of the person or firm in the middle of the envelope, the name of the village or city midway between the first line and the bottom of the envelope, and the name of the state near the bottom, with the ends of the three lines forming an oblique line extending toward the right-hand corner of the envelope. Such an arrangement will lose in symmetry as the oblique line departs from an angle of forty-five degrees. If the lines are of nearly equal lengths, they may begin on an oblique line of the same slant. If the first line extends nearly across the envelope, or if the address is composed of more than three lines, the same arrangement may be followed with all the lines except the first. The name of the street, or the building address, may follow the name line, or be put by itself in the lower left-hand corner. The name of the county, if used, should occupy a separate line following the name of the village.

The greatest care is essential in the use of abbreviations of state names. The safest rule is never to abbreviate a state name in addressing a letter to a small place, and particularly if there are well known places of the same name in other states. The rule is equally applicable to names of states which, in the abbreviated form, are easily mistaken for each other; as, Cal. and Col., Mass. and Miss., N. J. and N. Y., etc.

The word "City" should never be substituted upon an envelope for the name of the city, for a letter so addressed may easily go astray in the mails, as do thousands of them annually.

The following are samples of neatly and properly addressed envelopes:—

Harper's Weekly,

New York City,

P.O.Box 794. New York.

The Farmers' and Mechanics' Bank,

Minneapolis,

Minnesota.

HEADING, BODY, AND SIGNATURE.

Symmetry is no more desirable in the address upon the envelope than in all parts of the letter itself, and not nearly so hard to attain. The most common error in the heading is to begin the first line of the body of the letter about equidistant from the two margins, or even to the right of such point, a beginning made necessary by an effort to put the ends of the lines of the address proper upon an oblique line. The better way is to put the word or words used in the designation of the person addressed, at the left-hand margin, if necessary to prevent placing the first line of the body too near the middle of the sheet.

The usual punctuation of the heading and signature are shown in the examples following, except that, instead of the colon and dash before the words "gentlemen," "dear sir," etc., the colon alone, the comma, or the comma and a dash, are often used. The comma, or the comma and a dash, seem less formal, and are generally used in correspondence between friends.

The usual conventional phrases of politeness that precede the signature proper, are "yours truly" and "yours respectfully." Less conventional forms should not be used, except when justified by the relation between the writer and the person addresssed. Such phrases as "very respectfully and gratefully, yours," etc., are properly used only when the added word or words are intended to convey a feeling of gratitude, etc.

They are too significant for conventional uses. The use of "very" in these phrases is unobjectionable, but superfluous.

It is a common occurrence for women to write only the initials of their given names in their signatures to letters, and to be addressed as "dear sir" or "gentlemen," in letters received in reply. The given name should be written in full, or the word "Miss' or "Mrs.," in parenthesis, should precede the name. The word should be used even when the given name is written in full, for then the person receiving the letter knows whether the writer is a married or unmarried woman. The use of these words is not a matter of etiquette, but one of common sense.

The body of the letter should fill, as nearly as possible, the sheet of paper; but an amount of matter sufficient for only a half sheet should not be put on a two-thirds or a whole sheet, and begun half way down the same. It is better to use a whole sheet, putting more space between the lines, than to use a half sheet and write them without spacing.

The somewhat common custom of omitting the subject (we or I) of the verb, especially in business letters, is an offence against good English that should never be committed; and the omission of the word "leave" after the word "beg," though not unusual with good writers, is not much less objectionable. Thus:—

In reply to your favor of the 10th inst., "would say"—or "we beg to say"—that the information you seek will be found in a pamphlet which we send you herewith.

EXAMPLES.

Boston, Dec. 1, 1896.

Mr. C. E. Delano,
"Northwestern Tribune."
Minneapolis, Minn.

Dear Sir:-
Your favor of Nov. 17th, etc.

724 Nicollet Ave.,

Minneapolis, Minn., Dec. 1, 1896.

Messrs. Scribner's Sons,

153-157 Fifth Ave.,

New York City.

Gentlemen:-

I enclose herewith a Postal Money Order for $2.00, for which please send me "Problems of Modern Democracy."

Truly,

1 Enclosure. (Miss) Ella Mills.

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